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How International Leaders Overcome Difficult Social Conditions:
An Exploratory Study of Biography and Leadership Development

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE SCHOOL
OF EDUCATION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ST. THOMAS
ST. PAUL, MN

By
Wojciech Wloch

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT FOR THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

Using qualitative narrative inquiry, this study focused on a prosopographic analysis of Lech Wałęsa and Leymah Gbowee as Nobel Peace Prize laureates who grew up under oppression, but who managed to bring amity to their worlds. Cross-examination of their stories resulted in the design of a three-phase path to becoming a leader of peaceful change. Phase One consisted of the influences of strong mothers and great mentors on the upbringing of both future leaders. Phase Two of active leadership indicated that both leaders benefitted from focus, strong faith, and community in effecting long-term peaceful change. Phase Three showed how the two leaders, now renowned international figures, continued to lead. Shoup's prosopography of world-class leaders contributed to understanding the ethical and exemplary dimensions of leadership for peace and helped identify phases of leadership development. Greenleaf's servant leadership revealed some of the influences that shaped those "refined products of oppression." This study contributes to the domain of leadership development.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study was to examine biographical portraits of two international leaders (Nobel Peace Prize laureates, namely Lech Wałęsa and Leymah Gbowee) to explain those individuals' perceptions of their own pacific attitudes. Additionally, the task was to look for clues about remaining humane and achieving personal growth despite the grim reality of an overwhelmingly imposing social order.

The oppressor generally conditions the oppressed to submission and acceptance of the status quo the martinet imposes (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999). The two leaders of peaceful change who participated in this study grew up under or personally experienced oppression to a significant extent and learned how to overcome it. They rejected the idea of doing nothing or hoping for someone else to change the situation. They rejected violence as a way of effecting change but instead took the more complex and long-term approach of peace and service. They also involved the oppressor in the process of transforming the reality.

What led me Into This Study?

I grew up under an oppressive system where invigilation and repression were an everyday reality. In the 1970s and 1980s Poland was a miserable country for every young person. There was hardly any food in stores, no places to enjoy ourselves except friends' apartments in enormous blocks of flats and no opportunities for personal growth and development of our passions and true interests. Our parents struggled not necessarily with lack of money, but with no opportunities to spend it. Every day was an effort.

As adolescents we opposed this reality and found ways to express our dissatisfaction. We felt our parents' frustrations and imbibed them like sponges. In addition, we listened to

protest songs, sprayed pacifist signs on walls of grey, communist apartment buildings, and dressed as extraordinarily as possible. Television only screened good news about the party and, occasionally, excellent Polish, Czech and Hungarian movies about interpersonal, never political, conflicts.

My family history is typical for this part of the world: Poland was a battlefield of two World Wars. On its territory Nazis attempted to annihilate all Jews in Europe, and throughout the Cold War Soviets were depleting it of its natural and human resources. During my childhood, I experienced both poverty and wealth. My family fell apart, and my personal experiences were those of a young person thrown around by the winds of historical and personal changes. I also listened to stories of my older immediate family members who frequently talked to me and my sister about freedom and their struggles with the evils of World Wars I and II, communism, and persecution. Our grandmother told us thrilling stories about how she narrowly escaped murder or rape in the war-torn Vilnius of the late 1930s and early 1940s. We grew up with images of wars, lies about who won them, and more misinterpretations about how great the oppressors were to the oppressed.

Indeed, parents and grandparents of my generation raised us with a focus on history and politics, facts and fictions about both, and with stories of actual lived experiences of terror and loss. However, we also heard stories about the unsuccessful attempts by oppressors to break the oppressed; these stories constantly resonate within me and trigger my search for humanity and resilience under oppression. This is precisely what I wanted to do for myself and for others via this dissertation: conquer fear and demonstrate methods to set us free from oppressive constraints, whatever they may be.

This work, however, is not about the history and politics of oppression in Poland, although the interdisciplinary nature of this dissertation in leadership has also borrowed from those two disciplines and does include my own country. Indeed, we are products and producers of our history. After all, as De Rougemont (in Łysiak, 1983) said that

[e]verything that is to happen in the world first takes place in human heart and the search must begin there, because it is there where history is born. Everything that can be noticed in the depth of human physiology, as well as in human psyche, will one day inscribe itself in history. Such is the principle of human evolution and, consequently, of intuitive pursuits. (p. 6)

Instead, this work is about people who grew up under oppression, but managed not to become desensitized and indifferent to their realities. It is about our hearts that filter our senses and help us view our lives holistically, not through the narrow perspective of sight or touch. It is about our fears and innermost cravings for freedom, however defined; about setting free from the burden of what overwhelms us. The most fundamental aim of this work is an attempt to trigger the pursuits of freedom and to search for clues on how we can become *and* remain good despite growing up in evil, lie-driven systems. Every one of us suffers at some point and to some extent, yet, as Kołakowski (in Alfabet, 2009) said: “masking from [one’s] own self the sources of suffering does not allow [one] to either remove it or come to grips with it” (p. 10). And it is this coming to grips with and overcoming suffering that is one of the major themes of this dissertation.

Statement of the Problem and Research Questions

Literature describes victims of social and political oppression as likely to resort to bitterness, hopelessness, violence, and vengeance (Deutsch, 2006; Fanon, 1963; Hamilton & Sharma, 1997; Jameson, 2005; Machiavelli, 1517/1883; Sartre, 1963; Suvin, 2006). For example, Prilleltensky (2003) stated that “when one is the subject of scorn, frustration ensues and

learned helplessness quickly settles in. In cases like that, acting out one's oppression on others is not uncommon" (p. 198). Deutsch (2006) contended by stating that "the subordinated culture commonly reacts to the dominant culture with mockery and hostility fueled by their sense of injustice and of victimization" (p. 15). Any one of these reactions can turn into wars, bloody revolutions, and other retaliatory actions (Gramsci, 1975/2007; Holsti, 1996; Macaulay, 1852; Marx, 1883). Article 35 of the French *Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen from the Constitution of the Year I* (1793) stated clearly that "[w]hen the government violates the people's rights, insurrection is for the people and for any portion of the people the most sacred right and the most indispensable duty" (para 37). Many leaders of social and political revolutions that turned violent or bloody were themselves frequently victims of political oppression or poverty and hunger. Castro (see Betancourt, 1994); Ceausescu (see Pacepa, 1987); Hitler (see Fest, 1992); Mao (see Short, 2000); Mugabe (see Chan, 2003); Pol Pot (see Kiernan, 2002); Qaddafi (see Lewis, 2011); or Stalin (see Mildarsky, 2009) are but a few.

However, history also knows victims of various forms of oppressions, including some Nobel Peace Prize laureates, who have risen above their conditions of the oppressed to become artisans and leaders of peaceful change on the global level. Although some studies on the peculiarity of various leaders who responded to oppression by leading peaceful religious, political, and social movements do exist (Hamilton & Sharma, 1999 on Gandhi; Oates, 2004, on King Jr.; Sikorska, 1985 on Popiełuszko; or Yoder, 1972/1994 on Jesus), literature has a gap with regards to Nobel Peace Prize laureates who have become heralds and leaders of peaceful change in the world after suffering oppressions of social and political nature. To my knowledge, nobody has studied synoptically the lived experience of those exceptional humans, including Lech Wałęsa and Leymah Gbowee, to comprehend the rationale behind their common response

to violence by peace, forgiveness, gentleness, and reconciliation. Specifically, literature has not examined the biographical portraits of such leaders to explain those individuals' perceptions of their own pacific attitudes.

By conducting prosopographic investigations of lived experience of world leaders, this study aimed at identifying the basics of their moral, transformational, and international leadership, which embody humility and stewardship. In studying the lived experience of these world leaders, my ultimate goal was to discover the influences in their lived experiences. For example, what has prompted them to respond to adversity by promoting world peace? Why did they not give in? Why did they not radically abolish existing status quos quickly, by violent means? Why did they respond to violence with peace, to repression with peaceful resistance, to guns with words and arguments? Finally, what elements of their upbringing could have prepared them to become leaders of peaceful movements?

Reflections on the above concerns as well as on the lives of the two leaders in this study led to the following research questions:

1. How do Nobel Peace Prize laureates, who had experienced political and social oppressions, perceive their subsequent pacific behaviors?
2. What are the common influences in the lived experiences of two Nobel Peace Prize laureates, namely Lech Wałęsa and Leymah Gbowee, which have shaped them into responding to adversity by promoting world peace?
3. How have the common characteristics of the life stories of the two Nobel Peace Prize laureates affected their leadership?

Significance of the Problem

The purpose of this study was to analyze the motivation behind the peaceful leadership behaviors of those Nobel Peace Prize laureates who experienced oppressions in their past, by means of comparative biographical design (prosopography). How does this study distinguish itself from previous scholarly works? No scholarly publication on the two prominent figures focuses on the leadership influences that shaped their lives. Eringer (1982) for example, wrote about the impact the Solidarity movement had on the Polish people while presenting Wałęsa as a movement organizer. Craig (1987) focused on Wałęsa as an integral part of the history of Poland. Simpson (1996) discussed the reasons why Wałęsa failed as president of Poland. Lussier (2010) described a transition in Wałęsa's leadership from the perspective of constraints rather than opportunities. In the case of Gbowee, Frykholm (2011) did address her path to leadership, yet the emphasis was on her as a Lutheran Christian woman and on the role faith plays in her life. Griswold (2011) wrote about Gbowee's fears and talents. Pal (2012) also raised questions about the influences on Gbowee's leadership; however, responses do not concentrate on reasons. Berns (2012) focused on Madam Gbowee as a peacebuilder and a movement leader without asking about her path to leadership.

Even though much literature is available that documents the lives of Nobel Peace Prize laureates, I found only a few attempts at understanding the motivation of those leaders through their lived experiences. Some works (e.g. Lodge, 2006; Oates, 1994; Simpson, 1996) did try to get at these leaders' character and inspirations. However, I encountered few scholarly investigations of the impact of world leaders' actual lived experiences. In other words, not many works concentrate exclusively on motivations for their exceptional leadership. Moreover, as much as many of the works I examined are in line with some of the starting points for my study,

few originate from the laureates themselves. My study concerns itself with drafting biographies through personal conversations with two laureates: Lech Wałęsa and Leymah Gbowee. It is a mutual search for meaning in their behaviors and actions.

Additionally, even though some collective biographies of the two leaders in this study did provide synoptic studies, they did not focus primarily on those world leaders' paths to leadership growing up under oppression or they overlooked those two leaders' own voices. For example, Inhausti (1991) presented Wałęsa as a practitioner moralist who, like many other 20th century heroes and religious reformers, practices what he preaches. In this otherwise relevant text, the author portrayed Wałęsa as a leader whose inner values guide his actions. However, this chapter-long biography does not include Wałęsa in first person. Solidarity Members (1982) drew a portrait of Wałęsa with a focus on his leadership of the entire Solidarity movement. Likewise, Gach (in Kowalski, Cangemi, & Czaplicki, 2011) presented a biographical and pictorial portrait of Wałęsa together with many other heroes of Solidarity. The author's focus, however, was not on Wałęsa's leadership development. Lederach and Lederach (2011) inscribed Leymah Gbowee's Mass Action for Peace movement in the larger picture of healing and reconciliation in the post-conflict areas of the world. Thistlethwaite (2012) cited Gbowee's actions as examples of interfaith peacemaking. The sketch of brief biographical portraits of various world leaders, including Gbowee's, by Malley-Morrison, Mercurio, and Twose (2013) was a clear attempt to provide a universal definition of peace and reconciliation.

Definition of Terms

Oppression

For the purpose of this work, I defined oppression as Ancis and Chang (2008), and Deutsch (2006) did. According to Ancis and Chang, "oppression involves the abuse of power

whereby a dominant group engages in unjust, harsh, or cruel activities that perpetuate an attitude or belief that is reinforced by society and maintained by a power imbalance. It involves beliefs and actions that impose undesirable labels, experiences, and conditions on individuals by virtue of their cultural identity” (p. 1246). Similarly, Deutsch emphasized existence of inequality between groups in a social setting.

Story

In this study, I used Noonan and Fish’s (2007) concept of *Stories* as narrative tools that “convey what nothing else can: who we are, what we know, how we feel, the way change affects us, and our thoughts about what we should do next” (p. 2).

Servant Leadership

Drawing from such scholarly authorities in morality as Camus (1960/1995), Freire (1970/2010), Gandhi (in Nehru, 1934/2004), Hesse (1956/2003), and many others, Greenleaf (1977/2002) coined the term. I used the concept of servant leadership as a calling to lead other people or organizations that develops from the position of serving others. A servant leader is a servant first who becomes a leader later on.

Prosopography

Prosopography is a collective biography of a group of individuals who share some things in common, some things that previous publications about them or by them did not expressly state. For the purpose of this work, I used prosopography as a tool for the construction of chronological common influences in the process of leadership development.

Lived Experience

To Van Manen (1997), “in its most basic form lived experience involves our immediate, pre-reflective consciousness of life” (p. 35). In this work, I used lived experience to explain the reality and actuality of one’s life “through mediations, conversations, day dreams, inspirations and other interpretive acts we assign meaning to the phenomena of lived life” (p. 37).

Conclusion

The world knows socially sensitive leaders who grew up under oppression (Mahatma Gandhi, Oscar Schindler, Martin Luther King, Nelson Mandela, Shirin Ebadi, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, Leymah Gbowee, Abraham Lincoln, Wangari Muta Maathai, Lech Wałęsa, and Rigoberta Menchu) and became world-renown leaders. By examining oppression and ways of overcoming it, this research aimed at filling the gap in the literature pertaining to the leadership of two Nobel Peace Prize laureates: Lech Wałęsa and Leymah Gbowee. It is safe to state that no studies exist on those international leaders that examine the underlying factors for leadership development. This study explored the life stories of the two leaders of peaceful change and investigated what had incited them to break away from their grim social realities and go out there to make a difference. Their stories are essential to understanding some aspects of servant leadership and leadership development. In the next chapter, I examine the scholarly literature related to the main premises of this study.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Victims of social and political oppression are likely to resort to bitterness, hopelessness, violence, and vengeance in the form of war, bloody revolution, and other retaliatory behaviors (Deutsch, 2006; Freud, 1974; Lugones, 1990; Luxemburg, 1951; Marx & Engels, 1969; Sidanius & Pratto, 1999; Sorel, 1950; Suvin, 2006). Furthermore, some scholars, thinkers, and important historical documents have promoted violence as a way out of oppression (Declaration of the Rights of Man, 1793; Fanon, 1963; Holsti, 1996; Machiavelli, 1517/1883; Marx & Engels, 1988; Prilleltensky, 2003; Suvin, 2006). Many leaders of social and political revolutions that turned violent were themselves victims of oppression.

However, history also knows victims of various forms of oppressions, including most Nobel Peace Prize laureates, who have risen above their oppressive conditions to become artisans and leaders of peaceful change on the global level. Although some studies exist regarding the peculiarity of some leaders who responded to oppression by leading peaceful, religious, political, and social movements (Agosin, 1992; Alinsky, 1971; Bondurant, 1988; Pakulski, 2010; Powers, Vogeles, Krueglar, & McCarthy, 1997; Sharp, 1971), I found paucity in the literature. A gap in literature endures concerning Nobel Peace Prize laureates who were victims of imposing political or social systems, but who have become examples of how to peacefully change their world. To my knowledge, researchers have not studied synoptically the lived experience of those exceptional humans, in order to understand the rationale behind their peaceful response to violence. Specifically, literature has not examined the biographical portraits of such leaders to explain these individuals' perceptions of their own pacific attitude toward their oppressors.

This literature review encompasses four main parts. The first part called ‘Oppression and counter-oppression in the lives of Nobel Peace Prize laureates’ focuses on the types of oppression the two Nobel Peace Prize laureates under study (Lech Wałęsa and Leymah Gbowee) experienced. The second part deals with overcoming oppression and specifically with how the two Nobel Peace Prize laureates achieved this objective.

In the third part of this review, I analyzed and created a theoretical framework from the following relevant theories: Goldenberg’s interventionist approach, Gil’s non-oppressive social order, and Medina’s idea that resistance is democratic. I also included the feminist lens of oppression and counter-oppression while discussing Cudd and her feminist minority view and Oliver’s theory of forgiveness. In the fourth part, I introduced Greenleaf’s servant leadership and Shoup’s prosopography. These theories formed the analytical framework of this study. This chapter ends with a short conclusion.

Oppression and Counter-Oppression in the Lives of Nobel Peace Prize Laureates

This part fittingly begins with Deutsch’s (2006) general overview of oppression and counter-oppression. Following each section, it describes the ways Nobel Peace Prize Laureates overcame their respective oppressions. The overview includes the descriptions of the lived experiences of the two Nobel Peace Prize laureates.

What about Oppression?

Oppression, according to Deutsch (2006), “assumes that systematic, large inequalities are unjust” (p. 9). Furthermore, the author described oppression as “the experience of repeated, widespread, systemic injustice,” (p. 10), which can have structural civility. Oppression, therefore, is injustice *in corpora*, i.e. it is applied injustice.

Oppression as Deutsch (2006) saw it takes various forms. The first is distributive injustice and it manifests itself in form of wrongs in the process of the distribution of “four types of capital: consumption, investment, skill, and social capital” (p. 11). The author claimed that “every type of system – from society to family – distributes benefits, costs and harms (p. 12) and it is in the process of distribution that injustice may happen. The second form of oppression is procedural injustice, according to which “individuals judge the fairness of the procedures that determine the outcomes” (p. 12). “Fair treatment and procedures are a more pervasive concern to most people than fair outcomes” (p. 13), Deutsch claimed. The third form is retributive injustice, which relates to “the behavior and attitudes of people, especially those in authority, in response to moral rule breaking” (p. 14). The fourth form of oppression Deutsch called moral exclusion, which “is about who is and who is not entitled to fair outcomes and fair treatment by inclusion or lack of inclusion in one’s moral community” (p. 14). Finally, cultural imperialism (the fifth form of oppression) “involves universalization of a dominant group’s experience and culture and establishing it as the norm” (p. 15).

According to Deutsch (2006), the first factor that contributes to perpetuating oppression is the superior power of the oppressor. The author described this phenomenon as the “power to control, dominate, or exploit another person, group, or nation whose power is not sufficient to prevent such domination or exploitation” (p. 16). Superior power of the oppressor “establishes and enforces the laws, rules, and procedures which regulate the social institutions” (p. 16) hence solidifying that power. The second factor of maintaining oppression is systematic terror (official, semi-official, or unofficial) directed at the dominated group (pp. 16-17). Although it may not be necessary, still “the dominant group in a totalitarian society may find it expedient, as well as self-affirming, to keep salient the potential of systematic terror” (p. 17). Control over the

state is the third factor, whereby “the powerful in any society control the state and control of the state increases the power of those who control it” (p. 17). The fourth factor is control over socialization and indoctrination of the oppressed in accepting the existing status quo via “the family, school, religious institutions, and the media” (p. 18).

Deutsch (2006) listed many other factors that maintain oppression in place. The use of interactive power (“initiative in the relationship” p. 18) is the first one. The second is the social production of meaning in the service of legitimizing oppression (“‘history,’ ‘the law of nature,’ ‘the will of God,’ ‘science,’ ‘the criteria of art,’ ‘language,’ (and) social institutions of society” p. 18). Then comes the contribution of self-fulfilling prophecies to the maintenance of oppression (myths and stereotypes, p. 20). The distorted relationship between the oppressed and the oppressor is the next one. In this dynamic, the oppressor depends on the oppressed for subsistence, and the oppressed depend on the oppressor for coming to terms with their own vulnerability. The last factor is the psychodynamic relationship of the oppressor and the oppressed whereby “any attempt to end long-enduring oppressive relations will have to address the psychodynamic issues which lead people to resist changing unhappy but familiar relationships” (p. 22).

Oppression in the lives of Lech Wałęsa (1987, 1992) and Leymah Gbowee (2011) contained all the elements of the above definitions. Both suffered from injustices and experienced the abuse of power in their respective countries. Gbowee’s abusive partner dominated her, she frequently starved, and Wałęsa sometimes went hungry for days as a child. Oppressors infringed upon the two leaders’ values and excluded them from ‘the haves.’ In other words, both experienced personal as well as systemic oppression.

Oppression in the Life of Lech Wałęsa

Lech Wałęsa experienced oppression directly and indirectly from his early childhood years. Born months before the end of World War II in Poland, Wałęsa does not remember his father, who died a few months after returning from a concentration camp. In his autobiography, Wałęsa (1987) wrote that the Nazis had sent Boleslaw Wałęsa to a concentration camp instead of his brother, Stanisław, who had escaped from a labor camp. Because Stanislaw was not home, Gestapo soldiers decided to take his brother instead, and so they did. First, they almost beat him to death and fractured his skull, and then they sent him to a concentration camp.

During childhood, Lech experienced poverty and had to work. According to Craig, (1987), he wore pants that were too long and a shirt that was too short, because of a shortage of basic supplies. At those times one bought what was available, not what one hoped to have. In order to go to the nearby market to sell the modest surplus of butter, milk, or eggs, Lech's step-father had to borrow a horse. The Wałęsas' plot of land was small, poor and did not yield much crop; so much of it went to the State. Only the animals had some use and the family took good care of them before dividing the meat, unevenly, between the family and the State. In Wałęsa's (1987) own words, "at the age of five we tended the geese, at seven we took the cows out to pasture, at ten we took care of the other animals and did a variety of manual jobs – all that on top of school" (p. 29). However, at that time he did not realize yet that the toughness of his childhood was due to the severe oppression farmers were experiencing immediately upon the end of World War II. Craig (1987) called this period "the great degradation of the villages" (p. 85). To the author, collectivization, which is the creation of a Soviet-like system of devoting a certain percentage of land to growing produce for the State, had a devastating effect on Polish post-war peasantry. "[T]he State paid far less than the market value, [for crop or meat, so] peasants

continued to give them only a bare minimum” (p. 86). Yet, those who only gave the minimum had difficulties obtaining credit for mechanizing their production and the State continued to starve them “of supplies and technical assistance” (p. 113).

Wałęsa’s family was no different than any other peasant family in the then Poland. Craig (1987): “Like all peasant-farmers, they had a quota to fill, in accordance with the current Six Year Plan. If they had the audacity to kill a pig, without first fulfilling their quota to the State, they could be sent to prison for five years” (p. 87). The State had its informers everywhere and instances of peasants going to prison because they did not give to the State before providing for their families were widespread. Having a jail sentence ‘for a pig’ became proverbial.

At the age of 15, Wałęsa (1987) left home to attend a vocational school and learn a trade in the “‘agricultural mechanization’” sector (p. 34). Upon completion of his training, Wałęsa obtained employment in a State Agricultural Depot. As ‘institutions,’ the depots were to introduce new machinery to villages, but many young residents wanted to leave due to lack of perspectives. Wałęsa’s job “seemed [to him] a dead end, suffocating, and eventually unbearable” (p. 38). The depots were also farm cooperatives that replaced the private farming system. Therefore, they implemented state control over major agricultural production and served as the State’s controlling arm in local communities. Blue-collar jobs in post-war communist countries were a reflection of the oppressive character of the entire system that communists paradoxically established for the protection of working masses.

As a young employee in the depot, Wałęsa needed to do many jobs ‘on the side,’ because the State paid too little to survive. Entrepreneurial spirit and the skill to repair absolutely anything earned Wałęsa a positive reputation in the community. But the inability of the State to provide even the barest minimum for its working class to survive in rural areas caused Wałęsa to

want to leave and go where perspectives were wider, where chances were greater. Establishing a family in a place where it would be impossible to progress and just lead a bare existence made no sense to him. Additionally, Wałęsa did not own land, nor did he plan to become a farm worker at one of the nationalized large farms. Therefore, without a sense of purpose and after an unhappy relationship, young Lech decided to move to the city of Gdańsk, located in the north of Poland. He was 24 years of age.

Very quickly upon his arrival in Gdańsk and after obtaining employment at the Gdańsk Shipyard, Wałęsa (1987) realized that he was one of thousands of oppressed blue-collar workers who, like peasants in villages and small towns, did not have the slightest chance for social progression. As an electrician he had a relatively simple job of laying cables, but sheet metal workers, welders, and painters “worked in a real hell” (p. 43) of a ship’s hull, where the conditions were suffocating.

Still, Wałęsa’s (1987) job was not much safer or pleasant. He worked out in the open, no matter what the weather, and it often happened that he finished his day soaked wet. The shipyard offered no lockers, showers, or dryers. It made no sense to change, so Wałęsa, like many other workers, frequently went home wet and cold, especially in fall and winter. Similarly to other workers in his position, Wałęsa, too, suffered from stomach ailments. This occurred because a single work break of 15 minutes for the entire shipyard per day was not long enough for vendors to manage to sell food to starving workers. Many went back to work hungry and smoked in order not to feel the pain. Sanitary conditions were not any better. Here is how Wałęsa described his early impressions regarding this grueling experience:

When I arrived our shipyard looked like a factory filled with men in filthy rags, unable to wash themselves and urinate in toilets. To get down to the ground floor where toilets were located took at least half an hour, so we just went anywhere. You can’t imagine how humiliating these working conditions were. (p. 44)

Wałęsa felt that each of the workers “was just a tiny cog in a vast machine. Although we did represent a certain collective strength ..., we worked in an atmosphere of unrelieved tension and gloom” (p. 51), Wałęsa reminisced.

The shipyard offered accommodation, but the conditions there were very bad as well. In his autobiography, Wałęsa (1987) wrote that “eighteen hundred workers lived in cheap dormitories owned by the yard [and] two thousand camped out in rooms rented from the local Gdańsk population.” He was indeed one of these unfortunate workers. The dormitories, he added, “provided a metal bedframe with a lumpy mattress, a floor and four grey walls, all in a filthy state and reeking of mildew, a rickety table, and two chairs, each missing at least one leg” (p. 47). According to Wałęsa, “between the living conditions at the hostel and the working conditions at the factory, the men [including Wałęsa] were ... in a vicious circle” (p. 47). All workers wore dirty clothes and “seemed to behave in a vaguely military fashion, almost by reflex.... We [writes Wałęsa about his colleagues and himself] identified ourselves instinctively by social class, following the lead of shipyard slogans that seemed to surround us at every turn” (p. 51).

Shipyard authorities stressed efficiency and moved from paying for a completed assignment to paying for how much it would take a fast-working specialist to finish the task. As a victim to this “climate of oppression at the shipyard” (p. 51), Wałęsa (1987) wrote that:

the worker wasn't simply assigned the job of making a table, for example, but was also required to finish it within a specified period of time.... [Thus], the twenty hours initially allotted to the manufacture of a table, for which the worker earned 1,000 zlotys, could be successively reduced to fifteen, and then to ten hours, which cut the wages proportionately. So now the worker who wanted to earn the same 1,000 zlotys as before had to build two tables in the same amount of time. (p. 51)

The making of a table is just one example. This new efficiency plan applied to every type of work, including that of electricians, engineers, welders, etc. The fastest-working employee was now the minimum standard. This attempt to enforce efficiency put the workers on the edge. Wałęsa wrote that “[t]he money saved, at our expense, and which didn’t benefit [workers] in any way, served to aggravate the mutual distrust between labor and management” (p. 51). The new division of labor also jeopardized safety in the workplace. On December 13, 1961, a fire claimed the lives of 22 workers on board of *MS Konopnicka*.

A period of this grey reality continued throughout the 1970s. Wałęsa, like all blue-collar employees, had to work under deteriorating conditions and with no support. The authorities maintained methods of increasing output by firing disobedient workers or forcing workers to serve many supplementary hours. As Wałęsa (1987), witness and victim of this oppression, wrote:

What this meant in real terms was that people had to get up at four or five in the morning and travel to work on a train packed to the roof, that they slaved away until six or eight in the evening and then went home only to fall asleep in their chairs, in front of a bowl of soup or the television. They worked from dawn till dusk every God-given day and in frightful conditions: in rain, wind, and freezing temperatures, or else in suffocating heat, breathing the fumes given off by lead paints and toxic concentrations of welding gases, deafened by the ceaseless din of the hammers and vibrations of the polishing machines. (p. 82)

Like all his colleagues, Wałęsa, too, woke up early, worked long hours, returned home late, and received poor wages for all of this effort.

Riots after riots that from then on broke out almost every year on a larger or smaller scale caused the authorities to shuffle their staff at first, making ‘changes’ on top. Later, they would concede by increasing wages or resigning from price increases. Inevitably, though, they would eventually tighten the screws and squeeze the workers even harder. Diminishing wages was commonplace while stressing the increase of productivity and output from the workers.

The culmination of wrongdoing happened in the summer of 1980, when the government declared another food price increase. As a result, thousands of workers walked away from their duties in factories, railway enterprises, public transport systems, mines, and shipyards, in a general strike. Yet the focus was on the Lenin Shipyard, where Wałęsa and his strike committee were negotiating with the authorities about wage increases and reinstatement of Anna Walentynowicz – a symbolic figure in how ruthless the authorities were and an emblem of consistency in underground opposition. Shipyard management fired her for no reasons five months before retirement, even though she was a widow, had two children, and was ill. As Eringer (1982) wrote, “in taking this action, the shipyard management broke an official social security regulation: No one may be fired during an illness, especially after thirty years employment” (p. 52).

Feeling the support of the rest of the country, Wałęsa and the strike committee kept adding to the list of demands, which quickly grew to 21. To prevent adding even more, the authorities signed an accord and declared that they would meet all of them. However, instead of declaring full victory, Wałęsa decided that the events were not only about the Lenin shipyard, but about the entire population of Polish working class, and so he kept pushing for legalization of their entire movement – Solidarity. Under pressure, the government yielded and allowed Solidarity to register as a free labor union in court. However, immediately afterwards, the authorities began to discredit the union and its leadership and tighten repression even further.

Under obvious pressure from Moscow, on December 13, 1981, the authorities implemented Martial Law and violently cracked down on Solidarity activists. Arrests, detentions, plunder of Solidarity offices and some violent confrontations followed. Though it may seem counterintuitive, Wałęsa was lucky that he did not evade arrest. The regime had

decided to avoid this arrest in order to portray him within the movement as a traitor and collaborator. But military police did arrest him in error. So instead of becoming a regime collaborator, Wałęsa instantly turned into a hero and the face of the struggle. Immediately upon implementing Martial Law, the Army and the police arrested between 12,000 and 18,000 Solidarity members, some, as Craig (1987) wrote, “forced out with tear gas into the waiting arms of the ZOMO wielding new lead-lined truncheons” (p. 231). ZOMO was a special, ruthless riot police unit.

On December 14, 1981, Wałęsa began his year-long internment in a villa near Warsaw, cut off from contact with the outside world and events that took place during that time. From the moment the authorities interned him until this day, Wałęsa has remained an icon of the struggle of the oppressed majority against the oppressing minority. Like Africans under Apartheid, the Polish working class struggled to assert its freedom from the oppressive rule of a minority, which Craig (1987) referred to as “the privileged clique [with] power [given to it] by a foreign empire” (p. 233). Indeed, the authorities were in the minority and it is fear that forced them to react to people like Wałęsa with violence. It was those authorities who had promised their people a “second Poland, but they built [it] into a third world nation” (p. 228). Even though party membership opened opportunities to shop in special stores with loaded shelves, providing possibilities for promotion at a workplace, and state-sponsored vacations in beautiful resorts, the offer lured few. According to Mason (1982), at its peak in 1979, the Polish United Workers’ Party membership was at just slightly over three million (p. 139), which meant 11.9% of Poland’s adult population (p. 151). In 1971, after the December 1970 riots that started in Gdansk and Gdynia, as many as 142,900 members left the party, compared to 53,600 a year before (p. 140). The data Mason collected for what happened after the 1980 legalization of Solidarity

shows that “in January 1981, between 1.4 and 1.7 million of the Party’s three million members were also members of Solidarity” (p. 152). This is indicative of how likely the party was to cooperate with Wałęsa’s movement: very close to a half of the party’s members were willing to reform or dismantle it. The other half would create a true minority of less than 6% of the entire adult population of Poland.

That minority regime indeed ruled by providing its nation with the bare minimum of food (only potatoes and onion were readily available in stores; our parents needed to make special arrangements to secure everything else to eat). Indeed people had jobs, but they paid the least possible on which one could survive. This, coupled with constantly empty store shelves, made it extremely difficult to make ends meet. Additionally, those same authorities suppressed any attempts by people to regain their dignity with violence. Even a small strike triggered issuance to use live ammunition by the police, the Army, or ZOMO.

Oppression in the life of Lech Wałęsa and Leymah Gbowee bears more differences than similarities. In fact, except for their first names beginning with the same letter and their strong religiosity, there seem to be hardly any points in common. They are of opposite sex and they come from two different continents. Wałęsa could be Gbowee’s father. Furthermore, Wałęsa attempted to fix relative peace while Gbowee tried to put an end to war. Wałęsa made his history in the 20th century while Gbowee helped end the Second Liberian Civil War in 2003. Gbowee led a women’s movement, and Wałęsa represented a predominantly male workforce of shipyards and industrial complexes. Additionally, Wałęsa is of a very modest background of rural Poland and Leymah Gbowee comes from near-elites of the Liberian society. Wałęsa’s childhood was quite peaceful; he was growing up in relatively stable environment of rural Poland, where injustice was less visible than in cities. Interestingly, it was only when he was 24

that he began to suffer directly from the injustices of the oppressive political system. Gbowee grew up in a capital city of her country and experienced those injustices at the age of 8, 13, and then from the age of 17 throughout her young adulthood. Moreover, Goldenberg's (1978) orientations toward change identify Wałęsa as a traditional social reformer and Gbowee as a social interventionist. Gill (1998) showed that Wałęsa focused on creating institutions within the post-oppressive social order, while Gbowee concentrated on trauma-healing and peace-building within her society. What truly unites the two leaders, however, is the pursuit of freedom from systemic oppression as well as activism. Here is Madam Gbowee's story.

Oppression in the Life of Leymah Gbowee

Born in a hard-working and well-connected Kpele tribe family, Leymah Roberta Gbowee (2011) spent a seemingly happy childhood in Monrovia, Liberia. Leymah and her siblings "went to some of Monrovia's best schools and were in the same after-school programs as the children of the elite" (p. 9). As a child, Leymah had the drive, was "ambitious, and most of all, eager to please" (p. 12). In high school, her "shyness disappeared when [she] got up to speak," (p. 6). She served as school government senator, spoke at other schools, and was an honor roll student.

Despite attending the best schools in the country, Leymah grew up with constant fear, as her parents' marriage was dysfunctional. Her father's alcoholism and infidelity set young Leymah's parents apart. Later in her life, she experienced an abusive relationship with her husband, Daniel. Daniel was an alcoholic, who beat and forced her to having sex when she did not want it. Growing up, Gbowee (2011) "vowed never to be like some of the women [she had seen] growing up; [they] had babies with multiple fathers. The father of [her] children [Leymah claimed] would be [her] husband, and [she] would stay with him" (p. 44). These vows made her

continue a toxic relationship, marked by domestic violence until she found consolation with God again.

This domestic oppression played an important role in Gbowee's (2011) life, as it made her acutely sensitive to issues women were facing during war and peace in Liberia. Her personal life of oppression made her realize that domestic violence operates in cycles of "a romantic honeymoon period followed by hitting, which led to apology and making up and another honeymoon period" (p. 50). It is a vicious circle of joy, fear, pain, and joy. Patient with his children (Gbowee had four children by Daniel: Amber, Nuku, Arthur, and Princess), Daniel humiliated Leymah on an almost everyday basis. One day he even went so far as to bring home another woman and sleep with her while Leymah was at home.

When she was giving birth to Arthur in June of 1996, Daniel left Gbowee (2011) in a hospital in Ghana and never returned to pick up the mother and the baby. Leymah again experienced a moment of utter humiliation in face of an oppressive system and an oppressive partner. She wrote: "in Africa, if you haven't paid your bills, many hospitals literally hold you and won't let you leave" (p. 63). She stayed alone for a week with a fragile newborn baby, who came two months too early, on the hospital hall, cold and without diapers. It was only when a random doctor paid her bill that she was able to leave. Daniel explained that he had been trying to gather money to buy her out.

Gbowee (2011) took refuge in alcohol, enrolled in some typing school and "just drifted" (p. 38). She "would drink until eight or nine, then everything else [would] shut down" (p. 38). Also, she wrote that "when you move from innocence to a world of fear, pain, and loss, it's as if the flesh of your heart and mind gets cut away, piece by piece, like slices taken off a ham. Finally there is nothing left but bone" (p. 39).

It was only in 1997, after six years of a relationship that she decided to leave Daniel. At that point she had no direct support from her sisters, one of whom had emigrated and one stayed in Liberia (Gbowee was then in Ghana), and Gbowee (2011), pregnant, “felt very alone without their company. Daniel also had initiated an open relationship with another woman. Within a couple of days, [she] had packed things for the children and [herself]. Daniel was [not there] when [they] left the house. [She] never said goodbye” (p. 68) and went back all the way from Ghana to Paynesville, on the outskirts of Monrovia.

When Gbowee (2011) returned to Liberia in 1997, she realized that her country was in ruin. It was seven years since Charles Taylor had crossed the Cote d’Ivoire / Liberia border with his armed rebels in order to overthrow the oppressive rule of President Doe (Doe had imprisoned Leymah’s father for his relations with the previous President of Liberia – William R. Tolbert, Jr). Under Doe’s direction, privilege and tribal membership were necessary conditions for social mobility. However, Taylor’s rule was even more oppressive and from 1990 until 2003, the country and its people experienced civil war, which devastated Liberia. This is how Gbowee described her first impressions from Liberia in 1997: “There was still no electricity or running water; roads were impassable; hospitals and schools were [not in operation]” (p. 69). The country starved. “In towns and villages where aid couldn’t get through, men, women and children had cut off the tops of trees looking for edible leaves, then died of starvation” (p. 70).

Taylor had indeed devastated the whole country. Dire statistics summarize the situation in Liberia back then: “In a survey of 205 Monrovia women and girls ... nearly half said they’d been a victim of at least one act of physical or sexual violence by a soldier or fighter” (p. 70). Furthermore, “World Health Organization survey of 334 Monrovia high school children found that 61 percent had seen someone tortured, raped, or killed. Those with education or means to

flee and survive elsewhere had joined a great diaspora.... There was a pervasive sense of despair” (p. 70). Like the people of Liberia, Gbowee also experienced great misery at that time. She was 26 years old, had no job, depended on her parents again, was pregnant with her fourth child, felt useless, and hated herself. It was only when she realized that her children were suffering in exactly the same way as she did that Leymah decided to do something about her and her family’s situation.

Another point at which Gbowee (2011) felt that she needed to change her circumstances and break away from the oppressive force of depression or systemic oppression took place six years later when she faced real danger in relation to the work she did. As a counselor with the Trauma Healing and Reconciliation Program [THRP], she witnessed military trucks pulling into villages she worked in and then chasing and forcing boys to mount the backs of their vehicles. “They would be tomorrow’s anti-rebel fighters,” Gbowee remarked (p. 131). On another occasion, Gbowee missed death by sheer coincidence. She had been traveling through villages with her THRP group and happened to have some money left, after paying some villagers for cooking for them. “This day, without stopping to think why, [she] did what [she’d] done during the early days of the war when [her] mother sent [her] out to look for food: [she] wrapped the bills and wore them between [her] legs” (p. 131). When crossing the border between two states, a group of Taylor’s soldiers stopped them and thoroughly searched their baggage and vehicle in search of anything that was of any value. They did not find the money, so they let the group go. Gbowee later found out that those same soldiers stopped another team who worked through the Adventist Development and Relief Agency. They did not hide the money and the soldiers killed them all. This fact, by the way, made Gbowee realize that her life was in real danger. Fearing for her and her children’s safety, she quit working for THRP.

Wałęsa and Gbowee experienced different kinds of oppression. Wałęsa's family life was relatively stable (see Wałęsa, 1987, 1992; Wałęsa 2011), whereas Gbowee had been a victim of domestic oppression. However, they both suffered the misery of a systemic social and political oppression. Moreover, both saw and realized how an oppressive regime sucks vitality out of the lives of ordinary citizens. In turn, Wałęsa and Gbowee each experienced moments of endangerment as a result of oppressive political regimes, and individually remember vivid traumatic moments in their lives. Although Wałęsa did not see as much blood and hunger as Gbowee, he knew the maleficent impact of starvation on the poor. Particularly common to both leaders is their resilience and their ability to overcome oppression, which I develop in the following section.

What about Counter-oppression?

One of the points Deutsch (2006) made is that “awareness of injustice is a precondition for overcoming it” (p. 23). The author listed two main aspects of this awakening. The first is the differential sensitivity to injustice of the victim and the victimizer. According to this notion, “the victimizers ... commonly have the reassurance of the official definitions of justice and the support of ... major institutions” (p. 23). Victims, on the other hand, are “less likely to [identify with] the official definitions and the indoctrination” (p. 23), because they are the ones who experience the “negative consequences of the injustice” (p. 23). Consequently, Deutsch asserted, “if I am a victim of pain and harm, to think well of myself, it is necessary for me to believe that it was not my due” (p. 23). This is precisely where we begin to think in terms of challenging the victimizer and awaking to the sense of injustice imposed upon us.

According to Deutsch (2006), persuasion strategies or power strategies can undermine oppression. Persuasion strategies, including appeals to moral values, self-interest, and self-

realization aim at “convincing those in high power to change” (p. 29) so as to share power more equitably and reduce or eliminate oppressive practices. When the oppressed “assume that the oppressor is not fully aware of the unjust situation of the oppressed,” (p. 29) they appeal to moral values in order to enforce this realization.

Appeals to self-interest are effective when both sides of the conflict hear them, but this mainly occurs once the message reaches the oppressor and contains the following five fundamental elements. According to Deutsch (2006), the first of these is to state clearly what “specific actions and changes” (p. 29) the oppressed are requesting from the oppressor. Secondly, it is important to state that it would not be easy and without cost to the oppressor to fulfill that request. The third point is “a depiction of the values and benefits” (p. 29) the oppressor can extract from cooperating with the oppressed. Then the fourth element is for the oppressed to state that consequences would be negative, harmful, and inevitable, if the oppressor did not cooperate with the oppressed. Finally, the fifth element is “an expression of the power and resolve [of the oppressed] to act effectively and unwaveringly to induce [the oppressor] to come to an acceptable agreement” (p. 30).

Appeals to self-realization are effective, Deutsch (2006) stated, when the oppressor understands that he or she “must re-own and resolve his [or her own] feelings of vulnerability, guilt, and self-hatred, his [or her] rage and terror, and to undo the projection of these feelings onto the oppressed” (p. 32). In this case, it is important to demystify “the psychological process involved in the dominators” (p. 32). Preferably, this process leads to healing both the oppressor and the oppressed. They ultimately begin a conversation about their respective oppressions to address this conflict. Good power strategies also aid the process of overcoming oppression. One can enhance one’s own power by means of “increasing one’s possession of the resources on

which power is based” (p. 33). The other strategy is to develop power within one’s self or one’s group.

Deutsch (2006) also stated that through “persistent public refusal to be or to feel humiliated, Mandela [or any other peace leader for that matter, including Jesus, Gandhi, Wałęsa, Gbowee, and others] rejected the distorted, self-debilitating relationship that the oppressor sought to impose upon [them]” (p. 34). Additionally to that very rejection, Deutsch emphasized the importance of gaining allies. According to the author, “acquisition of allies is central to enhancing the power of oppressed groups” (p. 34). It is also possible to use the oppressor’s power against the oppressor by the oppressed. In this notion, such tactics may be about demanding some kind of service or using any kind of existing service on such a massive scale that the oppressive group is just not ready to provide without levying much cost (p. 35). Both Wałęsa and Gbowee had allies on the oppressor’s side, both demanded physically or psychologically costly services, such as wage increases or end of war. Both also considered “ridicule and techniques of embarrassment [as some of the] most effective weapons” (p. 36).

According to Deutsch (2006), another strategy for overcoming oppression lies in reducing the power of the oppressor by means of violence or non-violence. Although violence may seem faster and simpler, it is still not the best way out to use the same gun that kept the oppressed at bay. Deutsch clearly stated that violence “may be cathartic and psychologically empowering for those in low-power groups who feel enraged and humiliated by their oppression” (p. 37). The author also stated that “if well focused and executed, it may weaken the oppressed group” (p. 37), meaning when violence targets strategic interests, not innocent people. However, when fuelled by vengeance, the act of violence is not rational. Moreover, as Deutsch posited, “in the unlikely possibility of a victory over the oppressor, [violence] is apt to produce

leadership among the former oppressed that is undemocratic and predisposed to employing violence in its leadership style” (p. 38). On the other hand, non-violence achieves its strategic goal without exerting the harm to body and mind that violence does. Instead, it seeks to “respect one’s adversary and [claims that] even one’s enemy [is able to receive] care and justice ... compassion and goodwill” (p. 38). Deutsch then listed and discussed three broad categories of nonviolent actions, namely nonviolent protests, nonviolent noncooperation, and nonviolent interventions, all of which require “considerable self-discipline and courage,” (p. 39) which both Wałęsa and Gbowee possessed. Furthermore, Deutsch stated that “nonviolent actors are likely to be most successful in democratic societies where repressive force against them is likely to be relatively moderate and is apt to receive widespread, unfavorable publicity and to recruit allies to their cause” (p. 39).

In the next section I review literature that addresses areas of victory over oppression. Specifically, I look at particular strategies Noble Peace Prize laureates utilized to overcome oppression. As in the previous section, I attempt to present these within the framework of the laureates’ lived experience.

How Lech Wałęsa Overcame Oppression

Wałęsa (1987, 1992) overcame oppression by skillfully navigating around the oppressive system, making and using allies within it, and by ensuring millions were behind him. According to many scholars (Craig, 1987; Pakulski, 2010; Snarski, 2010), uniting various social groups and groups of interest to act on their respective oppressions was one of Wałęsa’s greatest achievements. He overcame oppression in Poland by inciting intellectuals to act peacefully against party-line studies of history and omnipresent propaganda. With his deep religiosity (Craig, 1987, wrote that Wałęsa actually considered priesthood, p. 108), Wałęsa excited religious

people not to use violence against any and all attempts to introduce atheism in school curricula and in everyday life. He overcame oppression by stirring his fellow workers to act against the miserable working conditions. Finally, he united all Poles to act against starvation wages, empty store shelves, arrests in the middle of the night, disappearances of their children and priests, etc.

Wałęsa was always close to the vocal groups of workers who were not afraid of speaking their minds. In fact, he reflected in his writing that “[e]ach day following the accident [on board of *Konopnicka* he] had a few more people around [him] to listen to what [he] had to say and to fill [him] in on what [he] didn’t yet know about conditions in the yard” (p. 52). Craig (1987) quoted Wałęsa as an advocate for methodical, consequent, and slow movement towards peace. In his own words, he stated there that: “A wall can’t be demolished by butting it with your head.... We must move slowly, one step at a time. If we rush at it, the wall will still be in place, but we shall have our heads smashed in” (p. 134).

At its peak in mid-1981, the labor union-turned political movement had membership of approximately 10 million (Pakulski, 2010). Indeed, the power of Solidarity lay in its numbers and in inclusiveness. Anyone could participate in this labor union and many did. As I mentioned above, almost half of all active members of Poland’s political establishment joined Solidarity the moment it became a formal labor union. In 1970, Wałęsa signed a document in which he asserted his loyalty to the communist regime (some of his co-oppositionists still consider it a disgrace). Back then this seemed to be a counter-intuitive move, but it was not so to Wałęsa for two main reasons: first everyone did it at those times; secondly he intended to dismantle communism from within. It gave him access to allies and provided opportunities to guide and misguide the system to cooperate with the people Wałęsa represented. Solidarity might have not grown to become such a significant movement if Wałęsa did not have an

inclusive agenda. His support of uniting various groups of apparently mismatching ideals into the movement deserves further emphasis. To Wałęsa, true freedom involves both the oppressed and the oppressor. This is what, I believe, won him the Nobel Peace Prize.

In 1968, solidarity of workers with students, although not void of mutual distrust, brought serious effects of cross-class unification of the Polish citizenry against the repressive rule within the Soviet bloc. In March of that year, Polish students revolted in the city of Poznań in solidarity with the citizens of Czechoslovakia in the wake of Prague Spring. Like the people of Czechoslovakia, Polish intellectuals were also weary of the tight rule of the simple- and narrow-minded autocratic rule of the party's chairman, who violently suppressed any attempts of the nation to breathe an air of freedom, and pitted various social groups against one another. As Craig (1987) wrote, "[a]s long as the three sources of potential opposition – the Church, the workers, the intellectuals – remained separate, the government could breathe freely" (p. 121). This breath was what Wałęsa attempted to steal by adamantly and insistently establishing alliances between and among the three major opposition players.

The authorities, as Wałęsa (1987) wrote, attempted to influence workers "by the deceitful insinuations of official propaganda [that] aimed at turning the worker against the student, the intellectual, and even the yard's engineers and the professional men – who [as some suggested], were responsible for the poor wages" (p. 52). Wałęsa knew this and attempted to influence the workers to aid the students in their struggle. He wrote that "several of us tried to make our fellow workers understand that if the students and intellectuals were targets for repression, then that was sufficient reason for us to support them" (p. 53). He saw that power lies in unity among the oppressed. Plus, he realized that students, church-goers, intellectuals, and workers were equally as oppressed and needed to unite in order to stand strong in opposition to the oppressor.

Another opportunity for getting closer with other social strata came in December of 1970, when an increase in prices forced shipyard workers to strike for dignity. One of the first things the workers did, according to Wałęsa (1987), was to form a large crowd and go to local authorities to demand “the dismissal of those responsible for the economic policy and [making] changes in the organization of trade unions” (p. 61). Secondly, when the first riots had already happened, some workers took over the loudspeaker car, drove it “to the shipyard, and then to the engineering school, where [they] apologized to the students for having failed to support their protest in March 1968” (p. 61). Wałęsa was already at the center of these events.

The strike of December 1970 began two weeks before Christmas, when the authorities announced another increase in the prices of food. The only demands were to release the workers whom the authorities had arrested and to rescind price increases. Always ready to be in the center of these pivotal protests and always first to negotiate and talk to both sides of the conflict, Wałęsa (1987) “caught up with the crowd, eventually pushing to the front of the marchers” (p. 63). This is the beginning of Wałęsa’s leadership through negotiations and peaceful conflict resolution. He addressed the military police when the workers arrived at their headquarters. “Encouraging them to withdraw if they wanted to avoid getting crashed by the crowd” (p. 64), Wałęsa quite likely prevented bloodshed.

To be sure, the 1970s were a miserable time for the Polish working class. Long working hours were just one of many problems. Insufficient wages, lack of sanitation, and poor working conditions caused workers to rise up against the oppressing system on a regular basis. After the bloody suppressions of the strikes at Radom and Ursus industrial complexes a group of intellectuals formed a Committee for the Defense of Workers [*Komitet Obrony Robotników, KOR*], which used the same party newspeak as well as Marxist ideology to advocate for the

rights of workers. After all, as Wałęsa (1987) wrote “*we* [the workers] were the proletariat” (p. 95, italics his). Everyone was angry, including Wałęsa. In his interview with Fallaci (1981), he stated that he was “a man full of anger, and anger [he has] kept in [his] stomach since [he] was a boy.... One has to be very angry in order to know how to control the anger of the people” (p. 3).

In 1976, more “organizations began to appear which were totally independent of the party” (Wałęsa, 1987, p. 97). For example, the Movement in Defense of Human and Citizen Rights began to report all the “human wrongs [and] violations of individual rights guaranteed by the Helsinki Final Accords ... signed by [Poland] in 1975. Then came the surprise of Karol Wojtyła – archbishop of Kraków – becoming the new Pope, John Paul II, in 1978. As Pakulski (2010) wrote, “the election of the Polish Pope ... and his strong stance on the issue of human rights powerfully articulated during his 1979 pilgrimage to Poland, had strengthened [the role of the Polish Catholic Church as] a symbol and the main repository of democratic and patriotic aspirations” (p. 54). This and international recognition of human rights violations in Poland (as well as a variety of other social, cultural, and economic factors), triggered the beginning of a peace movement that soon became Solidarity. What the authorities feared back in the late 1960s was beginning to take shape – an informal social accord between the Church, the intellectuals, and the workers, which Wałęsa was an active instigator of all along. He had visited the Pope, the Pope visited Poland, and Wałęsa actively cooperated with the Committee for Social Self-Defense within KOR. As Craig (1987) wrote, this organization “gave [Wałęsa] a legal adviser, Jacek Taylor” (p. 159). Lech “kept Taylor busy rescuing him from police clutches” (p. 159). KOR, Craig wrote, “brought legal aid to workers who had been at the mercy of corrupt courts; and gave financial help to their families [including Wałęsa’s] (p. 159). They collected proof of police

brutality.... For many they secured an early release” (p. 145). Solidarity began to take true shape as an all-inclusive social movement.

It was in August of 1980 that the situation took a turn to the favor of the movement. Events in the Lenin Shipyard in Gdańsk made Wałęsa realize three things. First of all, Wałęsa (1987) understood that “August had come too soon, that [they] needed a year or two more of hard work to prepare” (p. 118). Secondly, he realized that it was necessary to “change people’s way of thinking ... rather than overthrow existing institutions.... [The] organization was to be a sort of Noah’s ark with room for all, bringing the entire Polish nation into calmer waters” (p. 118). Thirdly, Wałęsa knew that it was not only about the shipyard. There were many other enterprises on strike, pressing similar postulates, that were smaller in size and significance than the shipyard. They also needed recognition, pay raises, and that simple ability to work despite differing in philosophy from official authorities in work organization and pay scales. By then, the shipyard guaranteed positive resolution of all their workers’ postulates. Yet, there were those other, less significant entities that also craved a sense of dignity. At this point in time, everything that had been going on informally needed to formalize and centralize around a single leader. Lech Wałęsa proved to be the one to fulfill this role. The above three notions propelled the movement to become an inter-enterprise undertaking that by now had formal world recognition from many international trade unions that began donating serious funds to aid Solidarity in its struggles. As Wałęsa (1987) wrote, the solidarity he had been dreaming about for many years came to life

at that precise moment when the shipyard strike evolved from a local success in the shipyard to a strike in support of other factories and business enterprises, large and small, in need of our protection: moral reasons impelled us toward solidarity with our neighbors and our co-workers in every line of endeavor. The result was that, in spite of having declared the strike officially over, that very Saturday afternoon [Wałęsa] announced that [the] movement would continue. (p. 123)

Hence, negotiations continued and party officials now had to discuss the matters of not just a shipyard, but the entire workforce in any and all industrial complexes of Poland. Delegates from the entire country arrived and the authorities had no other choice but to recognize that the strength of Solidarity lay in numbers. Eventually, on August 31, 1980, they yielded to the 21 postulates put forth by the Inter-enterprise Strike Committee. Most of the demands had to do with providing basic worker and human rights. Some referred to self-regulation of the economic system and to first providing for the citizens of Poland and only then to exporting Polish surplus goods. Wałęsa wrote: “With a minimum of ceremony both sides signed the papers, even though neither had any notion of what was happening behind closed doors in Warsaw” (p. 138).

From then on, for 500 days, Poland enjoyed the period of negotiated freedom and jumped at any occasion to manifest it. Some immediately wanted to hold accountable those who were responsible for arrests, crackdowns, shootings, and disappearances. Others, like Wałęsa, preferred to stay moderate in the way they operated. In his interview with Fallaci (1981), Wałęsa stated that “freedom is a food which must be carefully administered when people are too hungry for it” (p. 4). He proved to be a good administrator.

Wałęsa also overcame communist oppression by frequently looking up to the Polish Church for advice. In particular, he took counsel from two of its most prominent figures, who became moral leaders of the movement. Karol Wojtyła was now Pope John Paul II in the Vatican, and Stefan Cardinal Wyszyński, multi-year prisoner of conscience, was now Primate of Poland. Wałęsa met with both as frequently as times allowed. One particular meeting he had with Wyszyński reflects the moral values and foundations of Solidarity. In this conversation, Wałęsa (1987) recalled Wyszyński as saying that “in times of rapid social change there is a

danger of concentrating excessively on certain closely held points of view and prejudices....

‘It’s not a question of wanting to change the leaders; it’s they who must change’” (pp. 143-144).

Wałęsa’s religiosity and the spiritual support of the Church of Poland gave moral values to the movement and helped quell the voices of those who wanted to settle accounts right away, using repressive violence. In his autobiography, Wałęsa (1992) stated, “I ... opposed ... any kind of settling of old scores: revenge begins a vicious circle, and terrorism is repaid with terrorism. Of course, those who had been in power during the years of corruption and mismanagement should be ... accountable for their actions – but by the historian, and not by the judge” (p. 252). However, leaders need assistance of others to help masses understand that the ethical approach is the only right way. Luckily, the Church took this task during the time when Wałęsa was becoming a leader of peaceful change.

For example, the Light-Life Movement, initiated by Father Blachnicki, was immensely popular. Its purpose was to, as Craig (1987) wrote, “overcome fear in order to bear witness to and live by the light” (p. 141). By 1975, “fifty thousand people had joined Light-Life. This new and powerful movement within the Church was to have incalculable consequences for the future. For it signified that the young people of Poland were sorting out their priorities, and were finding that Truth came at the top of their list” (p. 141). Like Wałęsa’s Solidarity, the Light-Life movement, according to Cupiał (1994), “stressed non-violence and spoke out against the moral, social, and political situation of its day. They supported the early dissident currents which later became the Solidarity movement” (p. 230).

Throughout the 1980s and especially during and immediately after the Martial Law of 1981-1983, the authorities did all they could to return to their previous *modus operandi*. However, by then things had gone too far and despite crackdowns, internments, arrests, and

murders, the spirit of Solidarity persevered. Partially, thanks to governmental allies and, in part, thanks to the gradual ease of the communist grip from USSR, the authorities split into, as Pakulski (2010) wrote, “a pro-reformist camp (...) and the hardline (*beton*) faction” (p. 63, italics his). However, after all of these decades, there was truly no way back to violence. Even after the attempted assassination of John Paul II in May 1981 or the actual murder of Father Jerzy Popiełuszko – the Martin Luther King of Poland – in the fall of 1984, it was no longer possible to use violence. In fact, the authorities decided to make the trial of Popiełuszko’s immediate oppressors public and punish them proportionately to the act they had committed, instead of brushing the case under the carpet. At the very end of the regime, in 1988 and 1989, the authorities, clearly on the losing side, did not attempt to hold on to power with arms. Indeed, Wałęsa’s third way proved the right and victorious one.

How Leymah Gbowee Overcame Oppression

Leymah Gbowee overcame oppression by denying the oppressors their power as a Liberian woman. She recruited and excited other women to act on behalf of their own oppression as well as that of the system. She and her colleagues saw and realized that shedding oppression is only possible by forcing men to put down their weapons. She used fear, curse, and withdrawal from sex as effective strategies for overcoming oppression in everyday life of the women she worked with. Also, she very strongly identified with the movement, which in fact gave her the strength and the enthusiasm to work. She also felt a powerful connection to Assefa’s statement that true reconciliation is a mandatory condition for ending conflict.

Gbowee (2011) was one of the eldest children of the family. Her sisters had moved out before the war of 1990 so when Taylor and his rebels entered Liberia and began the bloody war, Leymah was the oldest child and became the leader of the house. She looked after the family

members who came to their home after leaving war-torn communities; she cooked and ensured the safety of all her and her parents' belongings. However, as she herself stated, she “wasn't afraid; [she] was angry. [She] was a girl who'd never before had to take any responsibility or make an important decision, and this should not be [her] job!” (p. 20).

Yet she did have to grow up very quickly, and she did. One day, Leymah's grandmother came to stay with the Gbowee family because of violence in her community. She arrived with some relatives and their children. When fighting came very close to the Gbowee house, and children, all family, were playing outside, Mala (Leymah's sister) quickly needed to bring the children back home with the help of the grandmother. Gbowee (2011) narrated the events from this point on in the following way:

[Mala] reached the porch just as [the grandmother] did, carrying one of the grandchildren she had raised, and whom she favored. In a second, they were all inside the screen door – and then I saw [the grandmother] push Mala's daughter back out. An aunt screamed, 'That's wickedness!' and I froze, because the sight was so shocking I almost could not believe it. (pp. 19-20)

This indeed is one of Gbowee's breakthrough moments and “during [that time, she] grew up fast, and the world started to change for [her]” (p. 20). At age 17, Gbowee realized that “death ... was all around and ... it could come at any time (p. 24). She continually heard stories of her teachers' murders, her girlfriends' rapes, and her other friends' killings. At that time, she “was afraid, especially at night, but [she] also got more and more angry” (p. 25). As one of the turning points in Leymah Gbowee's life, this event contributed to her wanting to act on oppression by inserting that growing anger within her.

Gbowee (2011) is very religious and has always considered the Church as “a place of comfort” (p. 22). Attending Church feels cathartic for Gbowee (just like for Wałęsa); it gives her inner peace and empowers her to act further on her oppression. She found her personal promise

in Isaiah 54: “*For the Lord has called thee as a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit... O though afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted, behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colors, and lay thy foundations with sapphires...*” (p. 47, italics hers).

Bible classes helped Gbowee (2011) come to terms with her “daily humiliations” (p. 50). It was approximately at that time in her life when Gbowee also discovered a different side of herself via participation in a training program for “social workers who would then counsel those traumatized by the war” (p. 50). At first, she considered this involvement as a way to get out of the house. Yet during one of the classes she experienced “a first glimpse, a first awareness of how bad [her] situation was” (p. 50). The class dealt with the need of social workers “to ‘train for transformation;’ that is, deal with [their] own issues before [they] could learn to help others” (p. 50). When after completing a set of courses Gbowee did fieldwork in an orphanage, she finally stated that “now when I got up, I felt a sense of purpose” (p. 51).

This was also a point in time when war broke out in Sierra Leone. Because Liberia was experiencing a period of relative peace, Gbowee (2011), who had begun her involvement in social work, realized that “just as people from [her] country had fled north during the fighting, Sierra Leoneans sought refuge in Liberia and despite [Liberian people’s] trouble, [they had to] help them. Even if you’re poor and struggling, you don’t kick out someone who comes to your house in need” (p. 51), Gbowee wrote in her memoir.

Officially, Gbowee’s job was to provide information about sexually transmitted diseases, but she quickly realized that female refugees needed more than just that – they were desperate for clothes, food, and proper shelter. However, what fascinated Gbowee (2011) about these heavily oppressed women was “their lack of bitterness and rage” (p. 52) that she herself had experienced. “They still had hope,” Gbowee noted (p. 53). One woman in particular impressed

Gbowee, because she wanted to go back to Sierra Leone even though a rebel soldier cut off her breast just because he was bothered by the sight of her breastfeeding her baby. When Gbowee asked her why she wanted to go back to Sierra Leone after what had happened to her, the woman responded “What else should I do? Allow *them* to win?” (p. 53, italics hers). This is the time when Gbowee realized that “this woman knew that her personal tragedy was about more than just her. It was national; it was political” (p. 53). From then on, her work with women and her own struggle became a political issue, which trickled down to her daily life: “the stronger [she] got, the more [she] retreated [from her relationship with Daniel]” (p. 53). Gbowee now began to think in terms of empowering women to act on their oppression. Her work with the victims of rape became a starting point to making them the agents of change not just for themselves, but also for their country. This is when she realized that her future lies in social work and that in order for her to empower other women, she herself needed to grow stronger.

Strengthened by her work and devastated by not having her sisters with her in Ghana where she had moved with Daniel, Gbowee (2011) decided to leave him. Yet she returned to Liberia for even more trouble, at least in the beginning. At that time, Gbowee’s children suffered so much that she began hating herself for bringing them back home. This is how Gbowee describes the cycle of self-hate: “you see the suffering of others but feel incapable of helping them, and that makes you hate yourself, too. The hate makes you sadder, the sadness makes you more helpless, the helplessness fills you with more self-hate” (p. 85).

Yet it was at that point that things finally took a positive turn for Gbowee (2011). She reconnected with Tunde – a gentle giant as she called him, who worked for Lutheran World Federation – a relief agency. With Tunde’s help, she began to break that vicious circle. Tunde helped Gbowee get her first job. They then started spending more time together, and eventually

fell in love. Tunde respected Leymah and supported her in her attempts to progress professionally and educationally. He helped her start working for the Lutheran Church in Liberia / Lutheran World Federation's Trauma Healing and Reconciliation Program (THRP) through which she returned to her social work. "Our goal," Gbowee wrote "was to do workshops with villagers who'd suffered during the war; get them to tell their stories so they'd gain awareness of where they were now and what problems they faced" (p. 81). The team would then "teach them conflict resolution strategies that would enable them to help their communities" (p. 81). She also taught the women she worked with that "if you are still angry at that person [who oppressed you], if you haven't been able to forgive, you are chained to him [or her]" (p. 102). In this sense, anger relates to forgiveness, but it is also a powerful trigger for action.

Thanks to Tunde's help, Gbowee (2011) began to see herself as a peace-builder. Peace-building, according to her, "isn't ending a fight by standing between two opposing forces. It's healing those victimized by war, making them strong again, and bringing them back to the people they once were" (p. 82). Gbowee saw peace-building as "helping victimizers rediscover their humanity so they can once again become productive members of their communities" (p. 82). Finally, "peace-building is teaching people that resolving conflict can [happen] without picking up a gun. It's repairing societies [that used guns], and not only making them whole, but better" (p. 82).

Gbowee (2011) wrote that she fell into her vocation. The people she worked with changed her life, as she remarked. Indeed, she ran workshops for women where they "wept as they recalled the destruction of their villages, the death of children, and the friends who'd been raped" (p. 83). Talking to them, listening to their stories, and empowering them gave her a feeling of actually helping people in a measurable way. She also came back to school for more

education and as she stated, she “loved learning, loved stretching [her] mind the way [she] had in those few weeks at the university before the war” (p. 87). Gbowee was passionate, enthusiastic, and liked to talk from her own experience. She read books on social transformation and got to believe, inspired by the writings of Hizikias Assefa, that “reconciliation between victim and perpetrator was the only way to really resolve conflict, especially civil conflict, in the modern world” (pp. 88-9).

In 2001, Gbowee (2011) graduated with an associate degree from Mother Patern and began to organize the Women in Peacebuilding Network (WIPNET). Her friend, Thelma, wrote a “training manual with exercises that would draw women out, engage them, teach them about conflict and conflict resolution, and even help them understand why they should be ... addressing these issues at all” (p. 112). She knew that “women can’t become peacemakers without releasing the pain that keeps them from feeling their own strength” (p. 114). “Emotional release,” Gbowee wrote, “isn’t enough in itself to create change, but WIPNET channeled that new energy into political action” (p. 114). She delved into “women-only sessions on nonviolence and how to use [their] own experience to understand gender roles; exercises to build self-confidence and teach communication, negotiation, and mediation skills” (p. 123). She wanted to change men-only involvement in “negotiating and crafting peace” (p. 125). “Now,” she wrote, “finally, we women were going to take action” (p. 126).

And so the women did take action. WIPNET visited mosques on Fridays to meet Muslim women, they walked to markets on Saturday mornings to talk to women, and they went to churches on Sundays with one, simple message: “Liberian women, awake for peace!” (p. 126). They, indeed, “worked quietly; no news organizations noticed what [they] were doing or reported on [their] efforts, and [they] liked it that way” (p. 127). Equally as quietly the

organization managed to institute the Christian-Muslim alliance of women and then began their truly visible existence by shocking the public “with a march down Tubman Boulevard to city hall – two hundred women, Christians in their *lappas* alternating with Muslims wearing head scarves” (p. 129).

Their mission statement was very clear. It stated: ““We envision peace. A peaceful coexistence that fosters equality, collective ownership [sounds like Solidarity’s attempts to fix communism, not abolish it] and full participation of particularly women in all decision-making processes for conflict prevention, promotion of human security and socioeconomic development”” (Gbowee, 2011, p. 129). At that point, Gbowee resigned from Trauma Healing and devoted her full energy to the growing movement. Also at that juncture, the movement gained momentum and required clear decisions of stepping up and truly pressuring the government.

In 2003 and after the April 1st fighting, WIPNET aired a public statement “condemning violence ... and making a single demand: ‘the women of Liberia want peace now!’” (Gbowee, 2011, p. 134). Publicizing the claim brought the movement to the center of attention. As violence continued in the near vicinity of Monrovia, WIPNET kept issuing statements and gathering women to protest against the situation. President Taylor clearly announced around April 9th that ““Nobody, n-o-b-o-d-y will get into the street to embarrass [his] administration!”” (p. 135, emphasis hers). Yet the women would not stop. They wore white and kept insisting that Taylor meet with them. Catholic radio stations and newspapers suddenly aligned with the growing movement, provided a voice to the women, and called for all women of Liberia to come to Monrovia on April 11. ““If you want peace,” the radio proclaimed, “make it your duty to

come to Monrovia city hall at 8 a.m. Wear white’” (p. 135). The response to the call was wide.

As Gbowee wrote,

the morning of the eleventh, the steps of city hall were a sea of white. There were hundreds of women there, maybe as many as a thousand. Some of the city’s religious leaders turned out as well. Taylor supporters and soldiers mixed through the crowd, and local media was everywhere.... There were women here who’d lost children and were filled with rage, women who were political radicals interested only in ousting Taylor, and women who were just drunk. (p. 135)

The women demanded cease-fire, talks between the government and the rebels, as well as deployment of intervention forces to Liberia.

Aggravated by a lack of direct response from Taylor’s administration, the women staged sit-downs on a field in central Monrovia, where they gathered deliberately without make-up, wearing white. Gbowee (2011) became the movement’s public face and was the only spokesperson for the cause. As she wrote, “the women of Liberia had [reached] physical, psychological and spiritual limits” (p. 137). However, they “had discovered a new source of power and strength: each other. [They’d] been pushed to the wall and had only two options: give up or join up to fight back” (p. 137). Government organizations took a day off to allow the women to support the protest. NGOs mandated their female employees to join. University students and professors came. The movement was now “Mass Action for Peace” (p. 138) and looked like a “spontaneous uprising,” (p. 138) whereas in fact Gbowee and her associates planned every detail about it.

The practices of Taylorists as well as those of LURD (which used violence against Taylor’s regime) required social intervention in the acts of violence so deeply rooted in the Liberian culture as a result of not just the-then, but also past oppressions. As Ackerman (2009) argued, in Liberia and other African countries “lack of justice and accountability in the peace accord undermined ... security, leading into return of violence” (p. 87). In other words, people

need justice so much that they are ready to resort to violence in order to obtain it, and when they do so without prosecuting the oppressors, anger-driven violence returns. One may make a claim, therefore, that it is that ideology of achieving justice via violence that Gbowee and her women's movement opposed.

Finally, Taylor agreed to meet with the women on April 23rd. Gbowee (2011), the spokesperson, described how women were tired of running, enduring the rape of their children, and begging for the simplest food. Now came the time, she said "to secure the future of our children. Because we believe, as custodians of society, tomorrow our children will ask us, 'Mama, what was your role during the crisis?'" (p. 141). In response, Taylor expressed his willingness to "engage in peace talks, but if [the] movement was truly fair [they] should demand the same of the rebels" (p. 141). They did, and they sat on a sandy field, with rain pouring on them, "wretched as the flood sank into the field's sandy dirt" (p. 142), waiting for the warring factions to agree to talk. At that point, the movement turned into a picket with the slogan: "we want peace, no more war!" (p. 142).

It was only at the end of April 2003 that LURD decided to open peace talks with Taylor again. During the period between April 11th and the end of the month, the women's movement fragmented, divided, and some women experienced what Gbowee (2011) called "a sudden case of amnesia" (p. 145), as personality clashes ensued, and so did "complaints and accusations" (p. 145). Similarly to Solidarity between August 1980 and December 1981, during relative peace and the lack of any immediate threat, the movement's delicately knit threads began to wear and tear. Of course, some accusations were personal, and touched Gbowee at her core when she heard claims that she was using the movement for fame. At that time, Gbowee wrote:

Sometimes it felt as if everything was happening so fast, there was no time to sit back and feel any pleasure. Look at what we've done! Sometimes all I could feel was dread. What

if we failed? What if I was leading all these women into something terrible? The more we pushed ahead, the more the pressure grew. I never liked to drink alone, so I would organize a gathering of women at my house, and we would drink together. More work, more pressure, more alcohol. (pp. 146-7, italics hers)

Driven to the extreme, the women decided to force their men to end violence by denying them sex. They “made their refusal religious, saying they wouldn’t have sex until [they] saw God’s face for peace. Bringing God into it made their men fearful of opposing them” (p. 147). The strike lasted for several months and “had little or no practical effect, but it was extremely valuable in getting (...) media attention” (p. 147). Donations (secret and open) came from “churches, but often ordinary men and women, even soldiers and government workers” (p. 149). Gbowee and WIPNET’s leadership “began getting money from serious donors, like Global Fund for Women, American Jewish World Service and the African Women’s Development Fund” (p. 149). Even Grace Minor, president of the senate in Taylor’s government, as Gbowee wrote “gave a great deal of her own money [to the cause] and at enormous personal risk” (p. 149).

The role of Gbowee’s WIPNET movement in emboldening Liberia was now truly significant. She inspired women for acting on their oppression. As Gbowee (2011) wrote, “you can tell people of the need to struggle, but when the powerless start to see that they can really make a difference, nothing can quench the fire” (p. 151). When Taylor’s indictment became public, and when he fled back from Accra to Monrovia, triggering more fighting, the women’s movement was already unstoppable. They became the conscience of not only the women, but also the soldiers and rebels. While Mano River Union Women’s Peace Network [MARWOPNET] sat at the negotiating table in Accra, the WIPNET women kept their white protest alive and exchanged information with them, right outside the luxurious hotel where the negotiations were taking place.

It still seemed to Gbowee (2011) that the movement was not accomplishing anything. People continued to die, negotiations broke, violence of every imaginable sort kept occurring in Liberia despite ongoing negotiations between LURD, MODEL, Taylor, political parties, and social groups. At that point, Gbowee decided to make a drastic step forward. This is how she related that breakthrough moment in Accra, Ghana:

It was time for [the negotiators'] lunch break. I led our women into the hallway, then dropped down, in front of the glass door that was the main entrance to the meeting room. 'We are staying right here.' More women came, then more until there were two hundred of us, and the hall grew hot and crowded with a sea of white T-shirts and black-lettered signs: BUTCHERS AND MURDERERS OF THE LIBERIAN PEOPLE – STOP! (p. 161, small caps hers)

After being accused of obstructing justice, Gbowee began to undress. As she said, "in threatening to strip, I had summoned up a traditional power. In Africa, it's a terrible curse to see a married or elderly woman deliberately bare herself.... For this group of men to see a woman naked would be almost like a death sentence" (p. 162). It worked. Taylor finally consented to exile in Nigeria, the rebels ended the violence, and American troops landed to aid the African peacekeeping forces. This way of overcoming oppression – by peaceful manifestation and playing to people's prejudices and fears – proved effective in Gbowee's case.

Still, terror lingered for the period of two years until the ascent to presidency by Ellen Johnson Sirleaf. As Gbowee (2011) wrote after the success in Accra, "it was time now to build on what we've done, so in the future, women's concerns wouldn't be pushed aside and we'd be full partners in running our communities" (p. 168). MARWOPNET and UNIFEM declared that women need involvement in the entire peace process. A period of disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration took place, where ex-combatants had to turn in their weapons and attempt to begin a new life of peace. Non-governmental organizations began their work anew and foreigners flowed in to provide ideas for the future of Liberia. Gbowee (2011) wrote, however,

that “it’s insulting when outsiders come in and *tell* a traumatized people what it will take for them to heal” (p. 171, italics hers), and added: “you cannot go to another country and make a plan for it. The cultural context is different from what you know that you will not understand much of what you see” (p. 171). Additionally, Gbowee stated that “people who have lived through a terrible conflict may be hungry and desperate, *but they are not stupid*. They often have very good ideas about how peace can evolve, and they need to be asked. That includes women” (p. 171). Indeed, Gbowee (2011) sought counsel from her colleagues and friends and concluded that “purging oneself of pain was only the first step. If a community wants to be made whole after war, especially civil war, perpetrators and victims had to come together” (p. 179) and thanks to the women of Liberia they eventually did.

Gbowee thrust herself into increasing the participation of women within the electoral process and, thanks to her and her teams’ activity, this effort proved successful. As she wrote, “when we began, only 15 percent of registered voters were women. When we [ended], it was 51 percent” (p. 183). Surely, due to this dedication and the overall role of ‘peace women’ in the process of instituting tranquility into this war-torn country, a milestone occurred. In 2005, Liberia elected the first female president in the history of Africa – Ellen Johnson Sirleaf.

In conclusion, Gbowee not only managed to shed oppression in Liberia, her movement also empowered women to act on the abuses in their country and at their homes. By living what she believed in and fostering awareness, Gbowee served as an example to other women. From then on, Liberians identify Gbowee’s movement as a game changer and a powerful force in aiding the well-being of their country.

Theoretical Framework

At this point I analyze a number of theories, which help shed a light on oppression and counter oppression. This theoretical framework includes Goldenberg's social interventionist approach, Gil's ideas of a non-oppressive social order, and Medina's notion that resistance is in fact democratic. In addition, this work examines select feminist theories of oppression and counter-oppression as they apply to the lives of the Nobel Peace Prize laureates in this study.

Goldenberg's Social Intervention

Goldenberg (1978) proposed a social interventionist approach to changing the condition of oppression. The author proposed that a social interventionist needs to bear three factors in mind: "collective action, an institutional focus, and an orientation toward altering existing practices and priorities" (p. 17). According to Goldenberg, commitment to collective action is necessary for those "systematically prevented from gaining access to goods and power" to bring about change from bottom up. Institutional focus stresses this disruption of regularity in the functioning of particular social processes, and this is why social intervention is synonymous with "institutional intrusion" (p. 17). Altering certain practices and priorities is about changing the existing status quos.

Goldenberg (1978) then listed "four different orientations toward the problem of social change" (p. 18). Table 1 below aligns them from conservative to radical. The discussion that follows presents a synthesis of all orientations in Goldberg's notion of social intervention.

Table 1

Approaches to Change and the Dimensions of Social Intervention

CHANGE FOCUS	SPECIFIC APPROACH	Identity with setting Goals		Need for Basic Change		Sources of Agency		Process Orientation		Peaceful Change	
		Yes	No	Yes	No	Setting	Others	Adaptive	Consciousness-Raising	Yes	No
Conservative		X			X	X		X			X
I.	SOCIAL TECHNICIAN										
II.	TRADITIONAL SOCIAL REFORMER	X			X		X	X		X	
III	SOCIAL INTERVENT- IONIST		X	X			X		X	X	
IV.	SOCIAL REVOLUTIO- NARY		X	X			X		X		X
	↓ Radical										

Note. Copied from *Oppression and Social Intervention* by I. I. Goldenberg, p. 20. Copyright 1978 by I. Ira Goldberg.

The first, most conservative, approach is that of a ‘social technician’ or the “guardian of the system” (p. 21). The results of this person’s work “generally show up as systems’ maintenance rather than systems’ change, regardless of the rhetoric that usually accompanies his [or her] style or techniques” (p. 21). The second orientation toward change is that of a ‘traditional social reformer.’ This person is a “negotiator, an extractor of concessions, the eternal middleman endlessly seeking to traverse some imaginary bridge between those with power and those who are being destroyed by the use and misuse of that power” (p. 23).

The third orientation is that of the ‘social interventionist’ or the person who “is in basic disagreement with the underlying ideology and practices that guide the operation of most social institutions” (p. 24). A social interventionist worries about “the consequences of that ideology on those whose lives are most directly and adversely affected by the social practices which emanate from such values” (p. 23). This description fits with Gbowee’s approach to conflict resolution. Finally, according to Goldenberg (1978), the ‘social revolutionary’ is “basically at

odds with the fundamental assumptions under which most social institutions function” (p. 25). This person is different from the interventionist in that “the social revolutionary does not perceive the [oppressed] as salvageable. His [or her] analysis rests on the belief that historical imperatives are categorical in nature and do not include the possibilities of relatively peaceful transitions of power” (p. 25). This orientation is the most radical of all. To me, the two middle approaches characterize Wałęsa and Gbowee. Their lives under oppression, but also ways of combating it help identify Wałęsa as a traditional social reformer and Gbowee as a social interventionist.

Goldenberg (1978) then juxtaposed these four orientations against the five dimensions of social intervention. The first of at least five orientations is the ‘degree of identification with the setting’s underlying goals, assumptions, and intentions,’ which is about a fit “between the fundamental values of the change agent and those of the setting or system in which he [or she] wishes or allows himself [or herself] to [interact with]” (p. 18). The author claimed that the social technician and the traditional social reformer do identify with those goals.

The second dimension is about a ‘belief in the need for basic systemic change,’ where the change agent has to analyze the situation and determine “whether or not significant change is [possible] in the basic underlying structure of the setting” (p. 18). In this case, the social interventionist and the social revolutionary are those orientations that recognize this need. The third dimension refers to the ‘source of agency’ and the “question of whose agent the change agent really is” (Goldenberg, 1978, p. 19).

Of all the orientations, only that of the traditional social reformer recognizes the importance of “extracting concessions from the setting or system, and not to equip the oppressed to get the concessions for themselves” (Goldenberg, 1978, p. 23). No other orientation that

Goldenberg describes sees change as coming from within the system or with a quiet aid of it. This dimension plays an important role in the entire course of the present study.

The fourth dimension is about ‘the problem of process,’ or how people view the “different ways in which they can either analyze or interpret the conditions under which they live” (Goldenberg, 1978, p. 19). The social interventionist and the traditional reformer will take the adaptive approach to this concept and seek “to ‘turn people onto’ the personal, interpersonal, and/or intragroup dynamics that define some of their problems” (p. 19). This approach is a prerequisite for oppressed individuals to see the proverbial *light in the tunnel*, or begin to hope for non-violent transition to democracy.

According to Goldenberg (1978), the fifth orientation is the ‘belief in the changeability of the system through essentially peaceful means’ whereby the change agent has to determine whether “the possibility of basic systemic change unaccompanied by wholesale violence of the total dismantling of existing institutional structures” (p. 21) does exist. Neither the social technician nor the social revolutionary believe in the possibility of peaceful change, but the traditional social reformer and the social interventionist do. Hope resides in them and in their ability to recruit others for the cause.

Gil’s Non-Oppressive Social Order

Unlike Goldenberg, whose concern was with reconstructing a society by presenting “a particular orientation toward the problem of oppression and social intervention” (p. x), Gil (1998) focused on providing actual strategies for evoking social change and did that from the perspective of social work. Although also theoretical in scope, Gil’s work was an attempt to bridge the gap between sources of injustice and oppression, strategies for social change, and

implications thereof to the profession of social work. The author addressed the ideal of a non-oppressive social order.

Gil (1998) defined oppression as “a mode of human relations involving domination and exploitation – economic, social, and psychological – between individuals; between social groups and classes within and beyond societies; and, globally, between entire societies” (p. 10).

Furthermore, the author provided a societal perspective on oppression. Paraphrasing Freire, Gil stated that in societies for which oppressive tendencies are characteristic, the difference between the oppressor and the oppressed is not so evident. Rather, Gil claims,

people in such societies tend to be oppressed in some relations and oppressors in others, while some relations may involve mutual oppression. Oppression [therefore] is not a static context but a dynamic process. Once integrated into a society’s institutional order and culture, and into the individual consciousness of its people through socialization, oppressive tendencies come to permeate and affect almost all relations. (p. 11)

The perspective Gil (1998) took on oppression, injustice, and domination was one of defining the “key institutions of social life and their underlying values” (p. 11). These are: stewardship (evident in servant leadership discussed further), organization of work and production and exchange of the products of human work, governance and legitimation, as well as biological reproduction (p. 11). The author discussed each and concluded that “historically, societies which developed nonoppressive social orders and work systems tended also to evolve just systems of exchange and distribution, while societies which developed oppressive social orders and work systems tended to evolve unjust systems of exchange and distribution” (p. 15).

However, Gil’s (1998) work was not just about defining oppression and dealing with the way it affects societies. It was predominantly about methods of overcoming this situation, about strategies of transcending oppression, and about giving advice to social change activists. Indeed, the author advised to “differentiate short-range goals or emergency measures from long-range

goals” (p. 33). Also, Gil called change agents “secular missionaries [i.e. individuals who] agitate among victims of oppressive and discriminatory practices, and [who] recruit people to join their movements in collective, change-oriented efforts” (p. 34) – precisely what the two Nobel Peace Prize laureates under this study did.

Gil (1998) dismissed the understanding of social transformation as a series “spontaneous, brief, revolutionary events” (p. 35). Rather, the author postulated, social transformation requires “lengthy processes, involving countercultural education toward critical consciousness, initiated and sustained by social movements, seeking to transform development-inhibiting institutions from local to global levels, into development-conducive alternatives” (p. 35). Gil (1998) went on to maintain that social movements are part of a longer social change process and will not produce outcomes if participants in social movements expect immediate results. It is through a long process of social learning that change becomes palpable. When individual members of a movement feel that others are experiencing the same process of incremental realization that change is indeed possible, they feel the sense of empowerment and gradually accumulate liberating strength.

Gil (1998) also listed forces that have to be targets for social transformation in social liberation movements. These include “patterns of actions, interactions, and social relations of the members of societies, and processes of consciousness which underlie, motivate, and facilitate the existing patterns of actions, interactions, and social relations” (p. 38). However, Gil also stated that critical consciousness is integral to social change. Therefore, the author defined this construct as consciousness that is alternative to the learned or imposed one and that challenges existing status quos (p. 49). Gil then postulated that social movements have to realize that “critical consciousness, and actions based on it, may be crucial to a meaningful future for the

human species” (p. 49). However, “unless shifts in consciousness cause individuals and groups to evolve new patterns of actions and social relations, the process of social change would be stalled on the level of ideas” (p. 57).

To offer effective approaches, Gil (1998) introduced nine “strategies to overcome injustice and oppression” (p. 62). The first two are: the need to differentiate between short-term and long-term goals, and “articulating long-range visions” (p. 63) of what a just society should look like. This is yet another scholarly confirmation that short-term, spontaneous actions bear no long-term, social change effects. The third tenet is “building social movements of activists committed to human equality, liberty, individuality, community, democracy, and harmony with nature, from local to global levels” (p. 63). Although these commitments largely stem from Western traditions and we cannot fully universalize them, engagement as such is surely an indispensable element of any social movement.

Also, critical consciousness (the fourth strategy) is necessary in everyday life. Without a look from outside, movement leaders would not be able to gain any perspective on their actions, and critical consciousness provides just that. Next, Gil (1998) listed “replacing competitive interest group politics with politics of common human needs” (p. 63) and “transforming one’s own consciousness concerning people and nature” (p. 63) – hence moving from the social to the individual consciousness levels. Unless everybody sees oneself as part of the movement, there is no possibility of considering it a unity. The seventh suggestion has to do with “creating and spreading alternative social, economic, political, and cultural institutions inside established social orders” (p. 63). Its Marxist and Weberian references are evident.

Gil’s (1998) non-oppressive social order requires equal treatment of all members of the society. Especially equality in the “stewardship and use of resources” (p. 13), the sphere of

production, “exchange and distribution of good” (p. 13), governance, as well as “biological reproduction, socialization, and social control” (p. 13) are indispensable. A non-oppressive society can only function under truly democratic conditions when equality is one of its many pillars. Many scholars claim that should this go missing, people have the right to resist.

Medina’s Democratic Resistance

Although it was predominantly about the insensitivities in social relations, Medina’s (2013) work focused on “the epistemic aspects of our social interactions.... [i]n complex and diverse communities under conditions of oppression and on the *resistance* that we can find in those interactions” (p. 3, italics his). According to Medina, true resistance is an indispensable element of power. The author did not only attempt to “elucidate the epistemic aspects of oppression, but ... also tried to offer a way out of the epistemic injustices that accompany oppression (p. 3). Medina claimed that in contemporary scholarship there is a need for the theory of injustice much more so than the theory of justice. Although the author acknowledged that “normal conditions are conditions of epistemic justice” (p. 13), Medina underscored that abnormalization of injustice ... contribute(s) to the invisibility of everyday injustices, to the formation of active bodies of ignorance that perpetuate the injustices and desensitize us to the suffering they cause” (p. 13). Hence, Medina (2013) started with the discussion of injustice rather than justice and went on to claim that the “practices and habits of resistance (...) are at the heart and soul of solidarity.... It is in and through resistance that relations of solidarity against domination and across different forms of oppression become possible and effective” (p. 21).

Furthermore, Medina (2013) claimed that “democratic interaction [actually] requires resistance, that is, epistemic friction and the mutual contestation of perspectives” (p. 11). This resistance has to begin “in the most intimate aspects of our cognitive-affective functioning

[namely] within ourselves and in the activities in which we feel at home” (p. 18). For resistance to set root, it is important for one to develop this sense of “perplexity and self-estrangement” (p. 19). These are “of utmost importance for cognitive, affective, ethical, and political learning; democratic sensibilities depend on them” (p. 19). The author then went on to state that “by seeking these experiences of perplexity and disruption and using them as mechanisms of learning, we can cultivate a social sensibility that opens our eyes, ears, and hearts to other ways of thinking, feeling, and living. This kind of social learning is ... the driving force of moral development” (p. 19).

Claiming that resistance is indeed democratic, Medina (2013) attempted to awake oppressed social groups to the complexity of “inherited cognitive and affective habits” (p. 22), which inhibit true pursuits of justice. The author also stressed the importance of each actor to realize her or his function in the process of resistance. After all, subjects often have more convincing arguments to actually practice resistance. Yet, the privileged “are precisely the ones who should bear a heightened responsibility and should make special efforts to resist and undo the exclusions and marginalizations of the social imagination” (p. 22).

Medina (2013) began by defining and discussing ignorance, otherness, and friction, and argued “for epistemic responsibility and for taking shared responsibility for patterns of epistemic interaction” (pp. 52-3). In the next step, the author discussed how various actors define resistance as a vice or as a virtue and attacked active ignorance, which “is the kind of ignorance that is capable of protecting itself, with a whole battery of defense mechanisms (psychological and political) that can make individuals and groups insensitive to certain things” (p. 58). The author promoted resisting ignorance as a way out of it. The best way to correct active ignorance is by fostering within oneself the virtues of “humility, curiosity/diligence, and open-mindedness”

(p. 23). Then, Medina argued, one needs to develop the notion of epistemic appraisal, which compares and contrasts and hence concerns not just the oppressed but the oppressor to the same extent. This paves the way to understanding testimonial injustices, which “not only [deal with] epistemic deficits that oppressed subjects have to endure, but also the epistemic excesses ... that privileged subjects enjoy and that spoil their epistemic character” (p. 24).

Further on, Medina (2013) considered the “relationship between responsible agency and knowledge” (p. 24). Even on the minimal level, the agent who acts on her or his oppression needs to know “about one’s mind, about the social world, and about the empirical realities one encounters” (p. 24). In addition to that, the author focused on how to “fulfill epistemic responsibilities under conditions of oppression” (p. 25) and posited that epistemic heroes are “extraordinary subjects who under conditions of epistemic oppression are able to develop epistemic virtues with a tremendous transformative potential” (p. 25).

Finally, Medina (2013) assessed “the role of the imagination both in the production and in the prevention of social harms” (p. 25). The author claimed that it is through the practice of resistant imagination that one is able to “contest exclusions and stigmatizations, and ... become sensitive to the suffering of excluded and stigmatized subjects.... We have the shared obligation,” (p. 26) the author concluded, “to exercise resistant ways of imagining that make us sensitive to symbolic exclusions, expressive harms, and epistemic mistreatments” (p. 26).

The author also addressed the issue of responsibility for justice and how one can “become progressively more responsible through interactive forms of agency ... and through *resistant* uses of the imagination (Medina, 2013, p. 23, italics his). In the final part, the author attempted to show how it is possible “to develop epistemically responsible forms of agency that can correct insensitivities and lead to pluralistic democratic sensibilities” (p. 23).

Counter-oppression through Feminist Lens

Cudd's Feminist Minority View

Cudd (2006) stated that in the past “oppression connoted conditions of violence and enslavement,” as well as “conditions of enslavement and domination” (p. 5). In the more contemporary times, oppression is the domain of social institutions and is inflicted on minorities and rooted not in liberty or lack thereof, but in equality or its lack. Cudd’s feminist minority view is central to her understanding of overcoming oppression. When discussing oppression as it relates to social groups, the author asserted that “inequalities may be [justifiable] in special cases by the behavior or special needs of the social groups at issue” (p. 51). Yet Cudd also made a clear point that “attempts at justifying unequal social constraints can easily be manipulated to rationalize injustice” (p. 51), and saw social constraint as a source of inequality.

In turn, inequality manifests itself in how society ascribes roles. Referring to Chodorow, Cudd (2006) raised the question of why women are a “mothering caring, nurturing, intimacy-building gender, and males become the gender whose psychology and social style (typically) is more suited to distant relationships” (p. 57, parentheses hers). The conclusion Cudd made is that societies expect women to play gender-specific roles and that “women are *not by nature* mothers ..., they are made into mothers by their mothers (and, through physical absence and emotional distance, their fathers)” (p. 57, italics and parentheses hers).

All in all, however, to Cudd (2006) oppression is harm that “systematically and unfairly or unjustly” constrains, burdens, or reduces groups of persons “by any or several forces” (p. 23). The author devoted a majority of her book to naming oppression, identifying its forces, and discussing the psychological harms of it. Indeed, aside from the aforementioned power roles

women may play in particular settings, it is them and their children who suffer most in oppressive conditions.

However, Cudd (2006) also proposed the more general theory of resistance to oppression and oppressive conditions. According to the author, there are three components of this theory. To her, first of all “the theory should correctly classify cases that we have clear intuitions on” (p. 188). Secondly, “the account of resistance should allow us to distinguish resistance from mere noncompliance” (p. 188). Finally, “our account of resistance should, in conjunction with a moral theory, allow us to distinguish morally good from morally bad from nonmoral cases of resistance” (p. 188). To Cudd, “an act of ‘resistance to oppression’ is an act that *issues* from an *actual* case of oppression, in the *right* way” (p. 189, italics hers). That *right* way lies in the need for “an intention to lessen the oppression, and that the intention to lessen the oppression has to be part of the cause of the action” (p. 191). According to Cudd, “a person or group resists only when they act in a way that could result in lessening oppression or sending a message of revolt or outrage to someone” (p. 192). “Morality of resistance,” Cudd claimed, “rests with the intentions of the agent” (p. 194), but since by definition one cannot justify oppression, “resistance to oppression, as lessening unjustified harm, is at least *prima facie* [justifiable]. A reasonable moral theory would require that the act of resistance has to be proportional to the oppression and aimed at the right persons” (p. 194).

Oliver’s Theory of Forgiveness

Oliver (2004) is another feminist scholar. To her, a theory of oppression should operate “between the psyche and the social” (p. xiv). The author developed “a psychoanalytical social theory of forgiveness as an alternative to both philosophical and psychoanalytic notions of subjectivity [basing] on struggle with, and alienation from, others and the world” (p. xvii).

Similarly to Medina, Oliver claimed that “resistance to oppression can restore agency, individuality, solidarity, and community” (p. 35). Through her theory, Oliver attempted “not to apply psychoanalysis to oppression but rather to transform psychoanalytic concepts – alienation, melancholy, shame, sublimation, idealization, and affect as the representative of drive – into social concepts by developing a psychoanalytic theory based on a notion of the individual or psyche that is thoroughly social” (p. xiii).

Existing theories, Oliver (2004) claimed, “that do not start from the subjectivities of those othered but rather start from the dominant subjectivity presuppose a defensive need to abject or exclude some other to fortify itself” (p. xvi). To Oliver, instead, the key to overcoming oppression lies in the “balance between the social and the psyche [that could help] develop concepts that articulate the relationality and link between the two” (p. xviii). In addition, such seemingly personally individual concepts as “drives and affects do not originate,” according to Oliver, “in one body or one psyche but rather are relational and transitory” (p. xix). The author claimed that oppressors deposit “the negative affects ... ‘into the bones’ of the oppressed” (p. xix) and went on to state that those “affects move between bodies; colonization and oppression operate through depositing the unwanted affects of the dominant group onto these othered by that group in order to sustain its privileged position” (p. xix). When summarizing the main tenets of her theory, Oliver addressed the issue of responsibility. To her, we are

responsible not only for our actions, beliefs, desires, values, and the other’s response but also for our unconscious bodily drives and affects. We are responsible for the effects of our affects on others. We are responsible for what we do not and cannot ever completely know about ourselves. This is radical ethics, and ethics that demands an endless responsibility so that we might imagine response-ability itself as constitutive of subjectivity, so that we might imagine our indebtedness to otherness and others whose provocation and responsiveness give birth to subjectivity and the singularity of each individual. (pp. xxiii-xxiv)

Oliver (2004) developed her theory on the tenets of alienation, melancholy, shame, sublimation, idealization, and affect. Drawing on the philosophy of Fanon, Oliver stated that alienation “cripples not only the body but also the psyche of those colonized and oppressed by the agency and arrogance of a privileged (...) subject” (p. 2). To Oliver, alienated people are “thrown into the world not of their own making (p. 41). Melancholy, in its classic sense is “the incorporation of a lost loved other to avoid losing her or him” (p. 89). What Oliver called social melancholy, on the other hand, “is the loss of a positive or lovable image of oneself and the incorporation of abject or denigrated self-images widely circulating in mainstream culture” (p. 89)? Shame – the “feeling of inferiority and defect” (p. 90) – is another building block of Oliver’s theory.

Indeed, shame relates to alienation in that it “results in a sense of double or debilitating alienation from one’s own experience that is directly related to one’s social context and position as marginalized or excluded within mainstream culture” (Oliver, 2004, p. 112). Shame also relates to “one’s sense of oneself as a subject and agent rather than to one’s actions” (p. 112). Shame and humiliation are inward feelings, Oliver (2004) asserted. Their outward manifestations are anger and rage. However, the author also stated that anger is not necessarily only a negative feeling. “Anger and aggression redirected outward or sublimated into creative expression,” the author claimed, “can renew agency and self-esteem” (p. 94).

According to Oliver (2004), “oppression and domination undermine the ability to sublimate by withholding or foreclosing the possibility of articulating and thereby discharging bodily drives and affects” (p. xix). Additionally, the author proposed “that all forms of signification presuppose the sublimation of drives and their affective representations into the realm of meaning” (p. xix). Idealization, Oliver claimed, “is necessary for sublimation and

robust psychic life: it is necessary for the transfer of drives and affects into signification; and therefore it is necessary to turn bodily symptoms into words” (p. 155). Importantly, sublimation, Oliver wrote, “requires not only social acceptance and support, but also social forgiveness. “We can apologize or ask forgiveness for bad acts,” Oliver stated, “but what does it mean to apologize or ask forgiveness for *being* bad?” (p. 90, italics hers). Also, sublimation “makes idealization possible” (p. xx), and the process of idealization does not punish, but, rather, forgives if it is accompanied by development of subjectivity with a sense of agency and belonging (p. 140).

All the above tenets form drives through which “affects can make their way into signification” (Oliver, 2004, p. 140). “Without the transfer to drives and affects into meaningful form of signification,” Oliver claimed, “the individual stays at the level of the body, of reality, where drives and affects can be expressed only as somatic symptoms and pain” (p. 140). And when “affects and drives become disconnected from words and symbols, then there is a loss of the sense of meaningfulness” (p. 141).

In summary, Oliver (2004) developed “a psychoanalytic social theory of forgiveness as an alternative to both philosophical and psychoanalytic notions of subjectivity [basing] on struggle with, and alienation from, others and the world” (p. xvii). After all, as Oliver stated,

forgiveness and acceptance, not alienation, define the human condition and subjectivity. We do not become beings who mean by virtue of alienation from being but rather by virtue of continually overcoming that alienation through signification. Through the sublimation of bodily drives and affects into signification, we regain, if only provisionally, our being as animals. (p. 197)

The next section covers the conceptual frameworks, which I propose to utilize in my analysis of the findings from this proposed study. Specifically, I discuss Greenleaf’s servant leadership and Shoup’s prosopography. These two theories helped me focus on the influencers I was looking for and on how I should examine the lives of Lech Wałęsa and Leymah Gbowee.

Relevant Analytical Theories

Shoup's Prosopography

According to Stone (1971), the author of this concept, prosopography “is the investigation of the common background characteristics of actors in history by means of a collective study of their lives” (p. 46). Shoup's (2005) studies formed an attempt at theorizing the process of becoming a leader with the use of prosopography. The author did that in the case of twelve renowned people in order to document the stages of developing an exemplary leader. Chosen criteria as well as studied literature all reveal that achievement of leadership is a result of a long process, that leadership itself becomes vocation and a way of life, and that no matter who becomes a leader and where there is an element of luck in it.

The author also distinguished between competent and exemplary leaders in his study. To Shoup (2005), competent leaders possess “requisite skills and knowledge base” (p. 9), but are not necessarily the type of people one naturally follows. Exemplary leaders have “ethical ends in mind and [practice] the ethical means to the end” (p. 9), and people admire them for this approach. Additionally, exemplary leaders are “influential and widely recognized for their accomplishments; [their] personal character and values make them truly exemplary” (pp. 19-20). Neither Wałęsa nor Gbowee possessed prior theoretical and practical leadership education. However, early in their careers both emerged as those who people want to follow. Furthermore, values guide both leaders' activities; there are ethical thresholds neither of them would cross in their pursuits of freedom. Basing on the above, I posit that both Wałęsa and Gbowee are exemplary leaders.

Shoup (2005) identified three stages and seven influences that according to him shape an exemplary leader. In stage one the author placed parent involvement, family, and educators'

influences. Stage two deals with context and a focus on the leaders' calling. Finally, stage three is about recruitment and retention of people the leaders surround themselves with to make their work successful. Against this backdrop, Shoup listed the seven influences behind an individual's leadership: parents, happy childhood, apprenticeships, formal and informal education, prodigious patrons, gracious critics, and favorable fate.

The first influence Shoup (2005) stressed when analyzing their upbringing, is the importance of the future leaders' parents. The guardians should be ambitious, dedicated to order and cleanliness, and should teach the child by example (p. 28). Also, they need to instill in a child moral and religious values in addition to knowledge of how to lose (p. 28) small or large battles on the path through life. Furthermore, parents should teach through positive examples (p. 28), by reading to the children (p. 40), and by being "affectionate confidantes" (p. 29). Very early in the leader's childhood, the parents must be clear about their expectations that the child will do something good with his or her life (p. 30).

The second influence, according to Shoup (2005) is a happy childhood. The author claimed that "supportive and secure childhood lends itself to successful childhood play and experiences, which for the most part germinated the seeds of confidence to that of ability and industry" (p. 32). The author also stressed the importance of the entire community the leaders grow up in for the development of healthy adulthood. As Shoup stated, "to raise children to grow up to be healthy adults, it appears a village of active participants concerned for the welfare of each child helps tremendously" (p. 32).

The third influence is that of formal and informal education. According to Shoup (2005), our leaders should be "well-read" (p. 33) when at school, "exposed to a variety of writers and thinkers" (p. 33), and "be conscientious towards [their] studies" (p. 34). Also, they must

[participate] in extra-curricular activities and [work on] projects with their professors (p. 36).

Basing on the example of Henry Ford's early life, Shoup concluded that a lack of higher education may become a disincentive and contribute to isolation, which may bring about lower self-confidence. This could make a future leader more prone to influences of advisors and confidants who are not always righteous (p. 37). Also, during schooling, future leaders should gain insight into the fact that the world is broad (p. 41) and that people of the world live in a variety of extreme conditions (p. 38).

According to Shoup (2005), the fourth influence is that of prodigious patrons. The author stated that patrons in a leader's life are "strategic catalysts" (p. 41). They are his or her moral voices because they guide thinking, provide encouragement, counsel, and financial support. These patrons are parents, other family members, acquaintances, supervisors, even the people a leader hires. There must be an emotional connection – a patron should at some point impress our leader. Also, patrons need to awaken questions in a leader, both adding and showing different dimensions in a leader's life. They should protect, support, and boost our leader. Also, they must be examples for a leader, his or her moral conscience, "synergistic . . . , strategic and essential compliments" (pp. 49-50). Preferably, they should be diverse people of various ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

Shoup (2005) also claimed that critics and adversaries "serve a determinative force in influencing the emergence of influential leaders" (p. 51). They form the fifth major influence in exemplary leaders' lives. They push leaders to "excel (...), force [them] to refine their positions, provide a context for defining moments and allow for victories" (p. 52). They also form a "determining influence on the emerging leaders' thinking and resolve for action" (p. 52).

Additionally, they are serious contributors to our leaders' learning from mistakes and "platforms for initial success" (p. 58).

The sixth major influence is what Shoup (2005) called apprenticeships and/or sequences of success. According to the author, "not only people ... played a strategic role in accelerating the leaders [he studied] to arenas of influence, certain events played critical roles in maturing and showcasing natural and developed competencies" (p. 54). Success, according to Shoup, is a learning experience for leaders. The triumphant events Shoup referred to and then developed with the example of various leaders become those very apprenticeships because they help the leaders gain "experience, confidence and recognition of their abilities" (p. 56).

Shoup's (2005) seventh influence is that of favorable fate. In the cases of leaders Shoup studied, "their destiny took bigger proportions and directions beyond what was initially imagined" (p. 60). Through the lives of leaders Shoup examined, fate sometimes "seemed to be more determinative than it often gets credit for" (p. 60). Additionally, "the timing of some circumstances provided the same sense of fortuitous advantage that some of the prodigious patrons afforded the leaders" (p. 60). Chapter 4 of this dissertation presents a prosopography of both Nobel Peace Prize laureates under study that examines the lived experience of Lech Wałęsa and Leymah Gbowee in light of the above seven influences.

Servant Leadership

Although Greenleaf (1977/2002) coined the term, the author did not define servant leadership in a clear and concise, dictionary-like way. Instead, Greenleaf listed a series of factors that influence a servant as leader. The starting point of any of the author's further positions was that "*the great leader is seen as servant first*, and that simple fact is the key to his greatness" (p. 21, italics his). Therefore, in order for any person to become a servant-leader, the

mandatory precondition is that this person be a servant by nature. Secondly, “if one is *servant*, either leader or follower, one is always searching, listening, expecting that a better wheel for these times is in the making” (p. 23, italics his). Also, natural servants, according to Greenleaf,

are trying to see clearly the world as it is and are listening carefully to prophetic voices that are speaking *now*. They are challenging the pervasive injustice with greater force, and they are taking sharper issue with the wide disparity between the quality of society they know is reasonable and possible with available resources, and, on the other hand, the actual performance of the whole range of institutions that exist to serve society. (p. 23, italics his)

Another key principle that underlies Greenleaf’s (1977/2002) notion of servant leadership is that “the only authority deserving one’s allegiance is that which is granted by the led to the leader in response to, and in proportion to, the clearly evident servant stature of the leader” (p. 24).

Greenleaf (1977/2002) listed a series of characteristics a servant-leader should possess. First of all, a servant-leader must serve first, work to satisfy the needs of those she or he serves, as well as make sure they grow. However, the underlying reason of every servant-leader is to lead for the betterment of society overall. Servant-leaders must begin with an initiative, as initiative gives direction for action and awareness of the overarching goal. Servant-leaders must also listen first and understand the needs of those they serve. Learning to listen is one of the preconditions for becoming a servant-leader. At this point, we see that Greenleaf did not reject the notion that one can become a servant leader with time. According to the author, “a non-servant who wants to be a servant might become a *natural* servant through a long arduous discipline of learning to listen, a discipline sufficiently sustained that the automatic response to any problem is to listen first” (p. 31).

Another characteristic that a servant-leader should have is the ability to use such language that it is “tempting the hearer into that leap of imagination that connects the verbal concept to the hearer’s own experience” (Greenleaf, 1977/2002, p. 32). For this, servant-leaders

must know their followers well and help them phrase their own experiences in a natural way. One of the ways to do so, Greenleaf claimed, is by withdrawal. To the author, “the ability to withdraw and reorient oneself ... presumes that one has learned the art of systematic neglect, to sort out the more important from the less important” (p. 33). Also, because of the above, the servant-leader will never reject, but accept and empathize with those who have not learned that art yet. Indeed, “servant as leader always empathizes, always accepts the person but sometimes refuses to accept some of the person’s effort of performance as good enough” (pp. 33-4).

For Greenleaf (1977/2002), a true servant-leader must be able to “have *a sense for the unknowable* and be able to *foresee the unforeseeable*” (p. 35). One is able to achieve this state, considered so far as “supernatural gifts” (p. 35), by speculations within the natural law. Such speculations help develop foresight – another key characteristic of a servant-leader. To Greenleaf, foresight “is a better than average guess about *what* is going to happen *when* in the future” (p. 38, italics his). Greenleaf stated that a “prudent person is one who constantly thinks of *now* as the moving concept in which past, present moment, and future are one organic unity” (p. 38, italics his). This, in turn, “requires living by a sort of rhythm that encourages a high level of intuitive insight about the whole gamut of events from the indefinite past, through the present moment, to the indefinite future” (p. 38). All of this is important for a servant-leader because, as Greenleaf claimed, “failure (or refusal) of a leader to foresee may be viewed as an *ethical* failure” (p. 39, parentheses and italics his). It is also important, because “foresight is the ‘lead’ that the leader has” (p. 40).

Another set of characteristics of a servant-leader that Greenleaf (2002) highlighted is awareness, perception, and persuasion. A servant-leader should focus on “opening wide the doors of perception so as to enable one to get more of what is available of sensory experience

and other signals from the environment than people usually take in” (p. 40). With awareness comes acuteness of the relationship of the servant leader with her or his immediate situations. This enables a servant-leader to “have more of an armor of confidence in facing the unknown” (p. 41). And this, in turn, equips the servant-leader with the ability to be persuasive when dealing with groups or individuals alike.

Servant-leaders also operate in a variety of ways, but the fact remains that they always work hard. “When they know who they are,” Greenleaf (1977/2002) claimed, “and resolve to be their own persons and will accept the making their way to their goal by one action at a time, with a lot of frustration along the way” (p. 45), they will do wonders. However, it is necessary to start with a concept, a conviction, an idea. As Greenleaf implied, it is something that initiates the pursuit of a goal. In addition to this, servant-leaders must also possess the ability not to act in pursuit of their goals, but to let the underprivileged, the have-nots, “find their own enlightenment, then define their needs in their own way, and finally state clearly how they want to be served” (p. 49). Here, Greenleaf referred to Milton who stated that ““they also serve who only stand and wait”” (p. 49).

The people who make good servant leaders also seek their own healing in the process of impacting their followers and the underprivileged they elect to serve. Greenleaf (1977/2002) stated explicitly that subtle communication exists between the leaders and those the leader leads if they all understand “that the search for wholeness is something they share” (p. 50). They also contribute to the sense of community, which now seems lost, but as Greenleaf claimed, is important for the happiness of any society. Each servant-leader, according to the author, must exhibit her or his “own unlimited liability for a quite specific community-related group” (p. 53) in order to confirm to the followers that she or he adheres to the primitive, but effective notion of

community, which current institutions (such as hospitals, orphanages or penal institutions) just do not replace. “Specialized institutions that exist apart from community,” Greenleaf emphasized, cannot satisfactorily deliver “human service that requires love” (p. 52).

Faith helps strengthen the sense of liability and address the issue of loss in the process of combating oppression. When discussing how servant leaders deal with loss of their loved ones, which in this work would include both family members and members of the movement, Greenleaf (1977/2002) emphasized the enormous role faith plays in the lives of great people. The author wrote that even in death there is an opportunity for growth. After all, when we lose someone close and someone we love, we experience vacuum that we can fill with something meaningful. However, to do it successfully, servant leaders must have

faith in the validity of one’s own inward experience; faith in the wisdom of the great events in one’s history, events in which one’s potential for nobility has been tested and refined; faith in doubt, in inquiry, and in the rebirth of wisdom; faith in the possibility of achieving a measure of sainthood on this earth from which flow concerns and responsibility and a sense of rightness in all things. By these means mortals are raised above the possibility of hurt. They will suffer, but they will not be hurt because each loss grants them the opportunity to be greater than before. (p. 340)

All the changes that servant-leaders effect begin not in the community, not in institutions, not out there, but within the servant-leaders themselves. Only when they realize that the true enemy is “not evil people [,] not stupid people [,] not apathetic people [,] not the ‘system’ [,] not the protesters, the disrupters, the revolutionaries, the reactionaries” (Greenleaf, 2002, p. 58), but “*strong natural servants who have the potential to lead but do not lead, or who choose to follow a nonservant*” (p. 59, italics his), do they truly become leaders who serve.

Conclusion

Through the four major parts, this Literature Review aimed at presenting the complexity of oppression and counter-oppression as well as how specific leadership theories are useful in

translating the latter term into action. Specifically, the first section attempted to define the terms, and the second, to translate the definition into action. The assertion was that there are numerous definitions and lenses through which scholars view oppression. There are also many ways individuals and societies can counter their oppression. Realization of its existence is a good start and leaders' task is to make societies realize their true condition. The latter part of this review focused on what characteristics true servant and ethical leaders should possess in order to be successful in effecting change. Through Shoup's prosopographic study and Greenleaf's notion of servant leadership, it is possible to understand the unique perspective that affects oppressed leaders who endeavor for peaceful social change.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to examine the lived experience of two Nobel Peace Prize laureates: Lech Wałęsa and Leymah Gbowee, and their motivations to move from the condition of victims of oppression to that of peace-makers. Both decided to do something creative with their oppressions by starting and managing massive peace movements, whose success earned them world recognition and, consequently, a Nobel Prize in Peace. Indeed, instead of organizing violent movements that quickly change existing status quos, the two leaders chose a challenging approach consisting of peacefully altering minds on both sides of the conflict. These leaders are ‘refined products of oppression’ – individuals who serve, are humble, and effective in changing existing oppressive realities. One way of conducting an investigation into people’s motivations is to use qualitative inquiry.

Design

Qualitative Methods

Even though qualitative research dates back to early American cultural anthropology and sociology, and the work of Malinowski (1922), Mead (1942), Thomas and Znaniecki (1927), and others, social scientists began to use the term in late 1960s with reference to a specific approach to scholarly inquiry (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). Denzin and Lincoln (2005) defined this approach as “a situated activity that locates the observer in the world” (p. 3). According to the authors, qualitative research “consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible” (p. 3). The purpose of qualitative research practices is to “transform the world [and] turn the world into a series of representations, including field notes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings, and memos to the self” (p. 3).

In relation to the above definition, Bogdan and Biklen (2007) referred to qualitative research as a method of inquiry that aims at collecting the type of data that is “rich in descriptions of people, places, and conversations, and not [easy to handle with] statistical procedures” (p. 2). Marshall and Rossman (2006) described qualitative researchers as scholars who take interest in “the complexity of social interactions expressed in daily life and ... the meanings that the participants themselves attribute to these interactions” (p. 2). Consequently, qualitative research takes place in “natural settings, rather than in laboratories” (p. 2) and applies many interactive methods to understand and interpret social phenomena with human beings at their center. Qualitative research questions do not operationalize variables, but “investigate topics in all their complexity, in context” (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007, p. 2).

For all of the above reasons, qualitative research is the approach this study took. After all, it involved the subjects in the process of investigation and it did so in order to transform, not measure the world. Also, this investigation posed no hypotheses, but delved along with the subjects in the broad area of open research questions. As a result, findings of this study emerged from data and not from testing hypotheses.

Qualitative research also fits this project because my research focused on real people who transformed their world in the settings of their daily lives. Therefore, it sought to interpret the events and decisions that these real human beings actually experienced. By involving the subjects in face-to-face interactions within environments they specifically chose, this study engaged these individuals in interpreting and reflecting on their own lives from childhood all the way to their accomplishments. The type of qualitative research that best fits this study is narrative inquiry. The next section discusses its tenets.

Narrative Inquiry

According to Chase (in Denzin & Lincoln, 2005), narrative inquiry is an “amalgam of interdisciplinary analytic lenses, diverse disciplinary approaches, and both traditional and innovative methods – all revolving around an interest in biographical particulars as ... the one who lives them [narrates]” (p. 651). As a qualitative approach, narrative inquiry dates back to the work of Thomas and Znaniecki’s (1927) study of life histories and other Chicago School’s research, especially from the 1930s (see Chase, in Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, pp. 652-656). More contemporarily, Connely and Clandinin (2010) equate narrative inquiry with storytelling. The authors emphasized the importance of story as a tool to interpret an individual’s past and a way “a person enters the world and by which [they] experience ... the world, [interpret it and make it] personally meaningful” (p. 436). Therefore, according to the authors, narrative inquiry is about considering experience as a phenomenon worthy of scholarly investigation. Likewise, Lal, Suto, and Ungar (2012) based the use of narrative inquiry on “the ontological assumption that humans organize their experiences, memories, life situations, and events in narrative form and as such the nature of reality is at least in part storied” (p. 7).

Narrative inquiry became the primary approach in this study. It attempted to explore more deeply the stories and biographies of Lech Wałęsa and Leymah Gbowee in order to find answers to the question of how they managed to overcome oppression. Using this method, this study examined experience as a phenomenon and attempted to draw exploratory ideas about a refined product of oppression. By constructing Wałęsa’s and Gbowee’s lived stories, by interviewing each leader in person, by investigating their autobiographies and official interviews they gave other individuals, and by consulting people who are close to them, I gained insight into how the subjects of this study interpret their own lives. Together, we sought to make meaning of

their personal experiences through the medium of storytelling. As Lindsay (2006) stated, in narrative inquiry, “experience is the key term, and epistemology is of concern” (p. 34). Inquirers, the author asserted, “reconstruct experience to learn more about something that is personally and socially relevant” (p. 34). Narrative inquiry “conceptualizes life experience as personal-social, encompassing the past-present-future on a continuum and as in a place. The dimension of time captures experience as a flow, something in process, moving and alive” (p. 34). Indeed, by examining the life stories of the two Nobel Peace Prize laureates through narrative inquiry, this study aimed to understand how its subjects were able to turn the context of oppression into a positive outcome for the world despite the very different settings and types of oppression they each had experienced.

Clandinin and Huber (2010) identified three commonplaces, i.e. lens through which one conducts narrative inquiry. These are temporality, sociality, and the place. All three play a significant role in conducting this type of inquiry, and form integral elements of the entire research experience. Temporality, according to the authors, focuses simultaneously on “past, present and future of people, places, things, and events under study” (p. 436). Although individual interview questions followed a chronological pattern, they were open. Even those questions that specifically asked about particular events in the interviewees’ past ended with a phrase of “and how does it inform who you are today?” Therefore, while answering, the interviewees explored their childhoods as well as active leadership periods and their current activity simultaneously.

Sociality firstly means that the researcher attends “to both personal conditions and, simultaneously, to social conditions ... of the inquirer and participants” (p. 436). Secondly, sociality “directs attention to the inquiry relationship between researchers’ and participants’

lives” (p. 436). Because I grew up in times of oppression, I could relate to the experiences of the interviewees and occasionally shared my own experiences. This strengthened our mutual relation during the course of our conversation. Also, as leaders, both interviewees understood that their individual experiences were personal as well as social. In fact, both still feel that they represent a larger community.

Finally, place refers to the setting of life events. According to Clandinin and Huber (2010), “our identities are inextricably linked with our experiences in a particular place or in places and with the stories we tell these experiences” (pp. 436-7). This is why some of the questions addressed the settings of important events in the leaders’ lives (see Appendix A and B). Taking all of these three commonplaces under consideration is a must to conduct a proper narrative inquiry.

Additionally, according to Clandinin and Huber (2010), narrative inquiry needs three different levels of justification for this type of research. Firstly, the researcher must have personal reasons to use this rather than a different approach. I wanted to explore the notion of peacefully changing oppressive reality together with the people who were successful in this. After all, when oppression ended in my country I was still too young to understand the forces that made it possible to happen. Secondly, the researcher needs to have a practical justification for conducting this type of study. I intended for this study to become a guide to peacefully overcoming oppression and contribute to the studies of leadership development. The intention was to examine the lives of oppressed individuals who managed to translate their anger to action for peace and identify some of the influencing factors. Thirdly, it is also necessary for a researcher to have social reasons for conducting narrative inquiry. In this case, the purpose of this study was to shed light on how two different individuals brought about change on a national

and global scale. I believe that every oppressed society has individuals with enormous potential for evoking change in a peaceful way. Determining influencers of the pacific attitudes of such individuals before they become leaders may prove helpful in identifying future leaders among the oppressed.

Institutional Review Board (IRB)

This study began with the University of St. Thomas' Institutional Review Board approval. At this stage, it became apparent that the rules of confidentiality could not be applicable to the subjects of this study due to the biographical approach it utilized. As international leaders, whom the world recognizes as agents of peaceful change, Lech Wałęsa and Leymah Gbowee are public figures who understand their participation in such studies as public service. Therefore, the biographical methodology made it impossible to use pseudonyms instead of the real names of the subjects. Additionally, before the beginning of the interviews, both leaders were aware that this study would not make them anonymous. The University of St. Thomas' Institutional Review Board approved this approach, hence making it possible to publish the results in the present shape and form.

The University of St. Thomas Institutional Review Board [IRB] requires that the principal investigator reports any changes and modifications in the process of constructing a study. After successfully defending the proposal for this study, and after transcribing the interviews with Lech Wałęsa (September 22-28, 2014, including translation into English) and Leymah Gbowee (October 16-23, 2014), it became necessary to verify the data with at least one other source. I revised the application and all supporting documents and submitted them to the IRB, which issued its consent to proceed on October 27, 2014. When Ms. Hafeeza Rashed gave her consent for an interview that aimed at confirming some of the findings of the interview with

Madam Leymah Gbowee, I submitted another modification to the Board on October 8, 2014. On October 27 of that same year, the Board issued its approval.

Subject Selection

Selection of two participants in this study is in keeping with Creswell's (2013) notion of purposeful sampling. According to the author, purposeful sampling "means that the inquirer selects individuals and sites for study because they can purposefully inform an understanding of the research problem and central phenomenon in the study" (p. 156). Creswell (2013) also stated that purposeful sampling "adds credibility to the sample when potential purposeful sampling is too large." (p. 158). This study limited the number of participants only to those individuals who received the highest honor: the Nobel Prize in Peace.

Most laureates I contacted in person or by email communication were unavailable to participate in the study. I had a chance to interact personally with seven of these distinguished individuals: Dr. Shirin Ebadi, Dr. Muhammad Yunus, President Frederik Willem de Klerk, His Holiness the Dalai Lama, President Mikhail Gorbachev, president Lech Wałęsa, and Madam Leymah Gbowee. Only the last two agreed to participate and remained in contact for as long as necessary to schedule an appropriate date and time for our interaction. Consequently, bearing in mind Creswell's notion of purposeful sampling, this study used a sample of two individuals.

I secured a meeting with President Wałęsa when he came to Chicago for the 12th World Summit of Nobel Peace Prize Laureates (April 23-25, 2012). The City of Chicago had invited me to be an assistant to Lech Wałęsa, a liaison between him and Summit organizers. To schedule an interview with Madam Leymah Gbowee, I had the benefit of a connection through one of my personal friends. We pursued our doctoral degree together in the same cohort. She knew a person who could connect me with the Liberian recipients of the 2011 Nobel Peace Prize.

I pursued this lead and eventually got a positive response. After exchanging a number of emails, that individual recommended me to a close associate of Madam Gbowee, who agreed to assist me in my objective after personally presenting the assumptions of my study to Madam Gbowee. Eventually, the associate obtained Madam Gbowee's consent and asked her personal assistant to make specific arrangements for our face-to-face interaction.

In addition to the two main participants, I also used purposeful sampling to approach the people who are in close contact with the two laureates in order to verify some of the findings. Due to an administrative change in the leadership of Lech Wałęsa Foundation, it became impossible to secure a follow-up interview with any individuals who know Lech Wałęsa in person. Also, his family members do not give interviews about him and always refer questions to his associates. In the case of Leymah Gbowee, I managed to obtain her consent and conducted a telephone conversation with Ms. Hafeeza Rashed, then Officer of Strategic Partnerships at Gbowee Peace Foundation USA, on November 7, 2014. Ms. Rashed had helped me with securing the appointment date, time, and location, and later she assisted in processing all the paperwork necessary for including the interview with Madam Gbowee in this study. Therefore, I had an open telephone contact with her, which I used to invite her to take part in this project. During the call, I asked Ms. Rashed about Gbowee's character, attitudes, day-to-day routines, and her *modus operandi*.

Selection of just one additional source to confirm the findings of this study has to do with the fact that the subjects themselves are legendary figures. For this reason, hardly anyone in the closest group of their family and associates is eager to speak about the laureates. Firstly, none of them are public figures of such stature as Wałęsa and Gbowee, and they do not feel authoritative enough to share their personal views and opinions about them. More importantly, both laureates

are still alive and so all the individuals they know prefer that they speak for themselves.

Consequently, family members and close associates are reluctant to agree to interviews about the laureates they live or work with and if they do, they are extremely careful when responding to questions. This reluctance was palpable during my short conversation with Ms. Rashed, for example. These people do possess unique knowledge about the laureates I studied, but are not ready to speak.

In summary, this study included Lech Wałęsa and Leymah Gbowee, two individuals who come from different parts of the world and have diverse social backgrounds. The two leaders are of different genders. Each of them experienced oppression in their own unique ways. Their single most important common characteristic is being Nobel Peace Prize laureates, which gives them the status of world-class leaders who have moved beyond their locality to spread peace around the globe.

The sample of two participants is appropriate. After all, Cresswell (2013) asserted that a study that looks deeply into the characteristics of a very small sample often results in more knowledge than a study that looks shallowly into a larger sample. To confirm this, the author stated that many examples of substantive narrative research exist with one or two individuals as subjects (p. 157). Also, the cultural diversity of the leaders is an opportunity rather than a drawback in this study. After all, the two individuals in this study grew up in different centuries, on different continents, and are of different genders. In the next section I detail how I collected the data that helped to respond to the underpinning questions of this study.

Data Collection Process

Mr. Piotr Gulczyński, then President of the Board at the Lech Wałęsa Institute, assisted in making final arrangements for the interview with president Lech Wałęsa. Through a brief

exchange of emails, he decided that the best time and location would be the two hours prior to President Wałęsa's departure from Chicago to Poland after a short visit and a rally he participated in on October 26, 2012. The interview took place on October 27, 2012 in the Club Lounge of O'Hare International Airport's Terminal 1 and lasted for more than one hour.

Ms. Hafeeza Rashed, then Officer of Strategic Partnerships at the Gbowee Peace Foundation helped make final arrangements for the interview with Madam Leymah Gbowee. After exchanging email communications and a number of phone calls, Madam Gbowee and I sat together in the comfort of her hotel room on April 26, 2013 and we talked for just under an hour. Ms. Rashed asked not to reveal the name of the hotel or its location.

The selections of setting proved conducive to this study, because both laureates had plenty of time, were not in a hurry, and were ready for an intellectually stimulating conversation. Even though there were random people around (typical for an airport), my conversation with President Wałęsa took place without participation of third persons. In the case of Madam Gbowee, her long-time friend joined about ten minutes into the interview to Madam Gbowee's satisfaction. Yet he remained passive most of the time and only when Madam Gbowee was describing her own leadership style did he offer some remarks.

Once they agreed to the interviews, each subject had ample time to prepare mentally for this exercise. Additionally, both have solid experience in giving interviews and knew that they could elect not to respond to uncomfortable questions or discuss issues that could harm them as international figures. These factors contributed to the pleasant interview settings and despite the neutral locations, both interviewees managed to delve deep into their lived experiences. Eventually, an airport departure lounge and a hotel room became spaces where guided narration became possible, and where Wałęsa and Gbowee were at ease to examine their own lives. They

welcomed all questions that already in the beginning of our interaction made them curious about this study even more.

The conversations began with an introduction that included a series of short questions that proved my preparedness. Knowing that Lech Wałęsa is a strongly religious man, the first question was about the church his friend managed to convince communist authorities to build in commemoration of the December 1970 strikes. The second question referred to his skills in archery when he was a young boy. It included a sub-question about whether this skill contributed to his precision in decision-making.

In the case of Madam Gbowee, the introduction included a promise that this interview would not deal with the sex strike she had mentioned in her memoir. Journalists frequently ask her about this moment so it was necessary to show her that sensationalism does not fit into my scholarly investigation. The second part of the introduction aimed at proving my preparedness for the interview from a cultural standpoint. This question asked Madam Gbowee to share the stories from her belly: ones that she deeply identifies with and that are important to her.

The above short introductory questions aimed at demonstrating my knowledge of each laureate's unique history. But they also made it clear that the rest of the respective conversations would be in-depth discussions involving the context of individual lived experiences. Therefore, I wanted the subjects to be aware that this was not a typical interview that aimed at identifying or confirming factual information. In fact, during the course of the interviews the laureates had multiple chances to realize that the interaction they had entered in was qualitative and that its purpose was to make sense of their lived experience in a prosopographic way. This was evident because most of the questions were both general in nature and specific in context. For example, one of the questions for Leymah Gbowee dealt with her understanding of oppression when she

was still young, but it also required her to infer from this and attempt to define oppression as a concept (*What kind of oppression did you grow up under during your own early childhood, before 1989? How would you define oppression as well as resistance based on this experience?*). Likewise, one of the questions for Lech Wałęsa addressed his understanding of his own generation's convictions and whether in this context he could identify turning points in his life (*How did you and your generation express your protest? Do you remember any turning points in your own convictions?*). Therefore, the structure of these interactions provided grounds for collecting the type of data that is necessary for this study to be truly exploratory in nature.

To summarize, the process of collecting the data occurred through two major stages. In the first phase, I re-read Lech Wałęsa's autobiographies, and Leymah Gbowee's memoir. I also reviewed their biographies and those elements of other sources that dealt directly with the two laureates' lives. The result of this stage was the creation of the two leaders' prosopography with the use of written material as a source of findings.

In stage two, I obtained consent to record and then conducted face-to-face interviews with Lech Wałęsa and Leymah Gbowee, and a phone conversation with Madam Gbowee's associate – Ms. Hafeeza Rashed with the use of two separate digital recording devices (a laptop and a mobile phone). After the interview stage had ended, I remained in direct contact with the two leaders' associates for follow-up purposes. Aside from the obvious reasons of completing this work, I wanted to make certain that the laureates had a chance to read the final product of this research and possibly provide feedback on its findings, after the process ends. Every email message we exchanged asked each of the associates to delete the attachments upon processing the requests for signatures or transcript approvals. In order to minimize the risk of our communication reaching unauthorized individuals, we exchanged all electronic communication

through mailboxes that were part of the official domains of institutions we represented. Lech Wałęsa's associate used his Lech Wałęsa Institute Foundation mailbox, Ms. Rashed communicated via the Gbowee Peace Foundation domain, and I used my University of St. Thomas e-mail address. From that point on, each electronic mail contained a confidential disclaimer.

Types of Data Collected

The first type of data this study collected resulted in the formation of a prosopography of Lech Wałęsa and Leymah Gbowee on the basis of written sources. In keeping with Shoup's (2005) approach, the prosopography identifies common intersecting points in the biographies of the two participants of this study. The second type of data is on the basis of narrative sources. The themes and stages that result from the interviews provide another approach to the examination of the two leaders' lived experiences. Table 2 below outlines the types of data the interviews collected and shows how they apply to the method of narrative inquiry.

Table 2

Collection of Data and its Relevance to Narrative Inquiry

Participant	Data Collected	Relevance to Narrative Inquiry
Wałęsa	- interview	- focus on storytelling - temporality, sociality - guided narration
	- two autobiographies: <i>A Way of Hope</i> <i>The Struggle and the Triumph</i>	- temporality, sociality, place
	- interview with Oriana Fallaci	- temporality, sociality
Gbowee	- interview	- focus on storytelling - temporality, sociality - guided narration
	- a memoir <i>Mighty be our Powers</i>	- temporality, sociality, place
	- interview with a close associate	- focus on storytelling

Next, I transcribed the three interviews and translated the one with Lech Wałęsa. After examining many other potential sources, there came a time when it was no longer possible to collect more data. At that juncture (it occurred around the middle of January 2015), no new source contributed to identifying more data for this study. Bogdan and Biklen (2007) referred to this moment in qualitative research as “data saturation, the point of data collection where the information [one gets] becomes redundant” (p. 69).

Afterward, I sent transcripts of the interviews to the laureates’ associates by electronic mail for review. Lech Wałęsa had appointed Mr. Jerzy Brodzikowski to be the contact person for this project and Leymah Gbowee had requested that Ms. Hafeeza Rashed be her liaison. The e-mails also contained all revised consent forms. This was intentional in order to avoid contacting the busy laureates more than necessary. Both associates remained in contact and were responsive throughout the process. Mr. Brodzikowski and Ms. Rashed were the only individuals who gained access to the above documentation. To ensure success in recording the interviews, I recorded them on two separate digital recording devices (a laptop computer and cellular phone). However, within 24 hours after completion of the interview, I destroyed one of the recordings to make certain that only one copy of each conversation exists. Per IRB approval, I will destroy all interviews, their transcripts, and notes three years after completion of this project. Because the laureates approved the transcripts for use only with this study, I do not intend to use the interviews for any other purpose than that of this very project. Consequently, if any more publications ensue, the present study will become their main source or I will seek a separate consent. The next section describes the data analysis phase of the present study.

Data Analysis

Creswell (2013) identified several ways to analyze narrative research. The one that best fits this study is the chronological approach. According to the author, with the use of biographical analysis, the researcher identifies “an objective set of experiences in the subject’s life” (p. 192) and then develops a chronological account of them. Because the purpose of this study was to identify common elements in the lived experiences of Lech Wałęsa and Leymah Gbowee in the process of their leadership development, creating a chronology of these two existences became the first stage of data analysis. Drawing on Shoup’s (2005) work, the prosopography of Lech Wałęsa and Leymah Gbowee became a sketch of intersecting moments in these two leaders’ lives. All sources of data, except for the interviews with the laureates, contributed to the creation of this prosopography.

Shoup’s (2005) collective biography provided the seven chronological categories that became the analytical units of all sources of data. These categories are: involved parents, a happy childhood, formal and informal education, prodigious patrons, critics and adversaries, apprenticeships/sequences of success, and favorable fate. Construction of the prosopography of Lech Wałęsa and Leymah Gbowee first required a close, in-depth analysis of data sources in search for findings that would fit each of Shoup’s categories. Therefore, it became necessary to identify the lived experiences Wałęsa and Gbowee shared in each of the seven categories. Then, I merged those findings into a narration and used quotes from sources to support the entire text. Chapter 4 presents the prosopography of the two leaders under study.

In the next step, I performed line-by-line coding of each section of the two interviews I conducted with the two Nobel Peace Prize laureates, in keeping with Charmaz’s (2006) notion of

“the initial coding practices” (p. 48). The purpose of coding is to “attach labels to segments of data that depict what each segment is about” (p. 3). Because this type of coding is useful in identifying “implicit concerns as well as explicit statements” (p. 50), this approach was necessary to single out initial potentially common elements of every story and then label them. I found 62 initial codes in the interview with Lech Wałęsa and 67 in the interview with Leymah Gbowee.

On the next stage, I performed focused coding of each interview transcript. According to Charmaz (2006), “focused coding requires decisions about which initial codes make the most analytic sense to categorize [the] data incisively and completely” (p. 57). This coding technique helped group the codes into intersecting categories. This process helped identify 42 common elements in each interview. Finally, the last step of data analysis was about further grouping of the 42 codes further into emerging themes and sub-themes that adhered to the chronological approach and revealed the process of leadership development of Lech Wałęsa and Leymah Gbowee. As a result, it became possible to arrange the findings of this study in 12 categories (Intergenerational and parental influences; From unfair social order to radical peace-making; Community influences; Other influences; Critical awareness; Focus on the cause; Sense of purpose; Faith; Leaders’ character; What Lech Wałęsa and Leymah Gbowee believe in; How they lead; What keeps them moving) and three main emerging themes (Pre-Leadership Period; Active Leadership Period; Narratives of Legacy), the first two of which contained multiple sub-categories of common influences and self-descriptors through stories of and by each leader. As the purpose of the study was to seek an answer to the “how” question it sought to identify influencers rather than particular traits of leaders. After all, the former are action drivers and the

latter are descriptors of characteristics. Consequently, the above findings constitute the answer to the main question of this study: how international leaders overcome difficult social conditions.

Ethical Considerations

This study treated its participants in accordance with the ethical guidelines of the University of St. Thomas' Institutional Review Board (IRB). All three interviewees volunteered their participation in this study, gave their consent, and were able to withdraw at any time. Each had a chance to become familiar with the transcripts of their respective interviews before signing the final consent form. The consent form described in detail the background of the study and its procedure as well as risks and benefits. The form also addressed the issue of data confidentiality and described the voluntary aspect of this study.

Because the investigation required that the participants be identifiable by name, president Lech Wałęsa, Madam Leymah Gbowee, and Ms. Hafeeza Rashed each received an interview transcript approval form. This document provided an opportunity to recommend any changes to the content of the interviews as well as contribute comments and notes. I clearly informed the participants of all of the above in order to ensure all risks and benefits of their participation were clear.

The major risk of the study is unwanted release of the content of the interviews. To minimize such a risk, I store two copies of all files on electronic storing devices, one in a password-protected laptop, and one on a cloud disk with a different password. None of the printed materials that relate to this study contain any identifiers of the subjects and are kept in the researcher's home. They remain in a different location than any books and official video recordings that pertain to this study's participants.

Validity and Generalizability

Creswell (2013) argued that “when an individual writes a biography, he or she writes himself or herself into the life of the subject about whom the individual is writing; likewise, the reader reads through her or his perspective” (p. 258). The author advises narrative inquirers to keep the reader in mind when assessing the quality of their work. To ensure the high quality of this type of study, Creswell recommended maintaining sharp focus on five aspects that characterize a thick narrative inquiry. First of all, the study should examine no more than three individuals. Close scrutiny into the lived experiences of Lech Wałęsa and Leymah Gbowee fulfilled this recommendation.

Secondly, narrative research should gather stories about important issues in relation to the individuals’ lives and develop “a chronology that connects different phases or aspects of a story” (Creswell, 2013, p. 259). This study achieved such validity by dividing its findings into two parts. The first is a prosopography that examined Shoup’s seven influences by means of stories from each of its seven chronological parts. The second part presented twelve categories and informed the emerging themes that relate to the subjects’ three stages of leadership development (i.e. Pre-Leadership Period, Active Leadership Period, and Narratives of Legacy). Like in the case of prosopography, this part also finds its thickness in the stories from the lived experiences of the two subjects of this study.

According to Creswell (2013), the fourth recommendation for validating the study requests that the author “tells a story that reports what was said (themes), how it was said (unfolding story), and how speakers interact or perform the narrative” (p. 259). Chapter 5 of this study responded to all these claims by identifying emerging themes, supporting them with categories, and then confirming the categories with sub-categories. It indicated within the

fragments of stories that informed those constructs how the participants of this study reacted to the questions and showed those moments when they needed to pause, slow down to think, or to emphasize the personal importance of the given elements in their narrations.

The final aspect of this study's validity is about the author, whom Creswell (2013) expected to reflexively bring "himself or herself into the study" (p. 259). This is evident in the fact that the idea for this study stems from my family's and my own experiences. Because of that reality, I was able to be actively present in the process of face-to-face interviews and guide the subjects' narrations toward deeper exploration of their lived experiences. In other words, I understood what they had been through and could relate to them on a personal level.

This study employed purposeful sampling that generated a population of two, which is not prone to generalizability. However, narrative research per definition is about giving voice to "fewer individuals than do other qualitative researchers" (Chase, 2005, p. 666). Also, paraphrasing Erickson, Merriam et al. (2002) asserted that in qualitative research "the general lies in the particular; what we learn in a particular situation we can transfer to similar situations subsequently encountered" (p. 28). Therefore, generalizability of this study becomes a personal matter. In light of this view, Merriam et al. claim that "readers themselves determine the extent to which findings from a study can be applied to their context" (pp. 28-9).

Personal Biases

This narrative inquiry process required the researcher to be the instrument of the study, allowing for potential biases. My personal history of oppression might have interfered with this study and it informed much of what I examined. To overcome such biases, I used reflexivity, i.e. treatment of "human as instrument" (Guba & Lincoln, 2005, p. 210) and Reinharz's (1997) three categories of the researcher's self, consisting of: "research-based selves, brought selves (the

selves that historically, socially, and personally create our standpoints), and situationally created selves” (p. 210). Qualitative reflexivity helped with the self-awareness of any personal intrusion into the objectivity due to my investigation. Reinharz’s (1997) research-based self allowed me to understand that I am an academic who is trying to examine a particular topic. I kept in mind the fact that I needed to empathize, listen, give my feedback to my subject, and eventually distance myself from the relationship with my interviewees (p. 5).

Additionally, the fact that I was both interviewer and translator from Polish to English may cause loss of meaning in some words or expressions. However, I am confident that my English education and extensive experience as a translator have provided me with suitable tools to translate the transcripts with an objective eye. Also, my study lacks anonymity; I revealed the identity of my participants. This carries the danger of my interviewees potentially hiding facts that would negate their reputation, and, therefore, lowering the validity of this study. This is why prior to conducting the interviews I extensively studied autobiographical and biographical accounts of Lech Wałęsa’s and Leymah Gbowee’s lives. Also, I only used external sources for the creation of the two leaders’ prosopography, and sought confirmations of the main findings of this study by individuals who know them personally and well. In the next chapter, I present a comparative biography of both leaders based upon the prosopographic model presented by Shoup (2005).

CHAPTER FOUR

PROSOPOGRAPHY OF LECH WAŁĘSA AND LEYMAH GBOWEE

The purpose of this prosopography was to present the common denominators in the lives of Wałęsa and Gbowee and to identify influences in their lives that have made them world leaders of peace after suffering some form of oppression. As a result of data collected from biographies and autobiographies, this chapter presents the findings in relation to events and individuals that had shaped our two leaders. By using prosopography, this chapter presents similarities in upbringing and identifies common influences on the leadership development of Lech Wałęsa and Leymah Gbowee. Basing on the seven influences in Shoup's (2005) model, this prosopography contains seven sections: involved parents, a happy childhood, formal and informal education, prodigious patrons, critics and adversaries, apprenticeships/sequences of success, and favorable fate. Because this study used existing biographical and autobiographical data, I quote only the passages that inform the understanding of the lives of both participants. Findings in the next chapter show the importance of the individual influences in the lives of Lech Wałęsa and Leymah Gbowee.

Involved Parents

Wałęsa's father died when Lech was still very young. His mother married her late husband's older brother, which was a source of tensions within the family, including the strong disapproval by Lech and some of his siblings. Boyes (1994) sees these frictions as important sources of Lech Wałęsa's leadership. The author claims that this situation "gave him an ambiguous relationship to authority, part rebel, part conformist" (p. 35).

Still, his mother greatly influenced his life. Although she was not very warm and cuddly, she provided her son with the leadership impetus Shoup's (2005) study described. She was very

proud, very religious, and adamantly against anger and resentment. As Wałęsa (1987) wrote, “before going to church [at least once a week], we all had to make our peace with each other” (p. 28). His mother also stressed cleanliness and dressed her children immaculately. Wałęsa also remembers his mother as a guardian of moral education, as a teacher of Polish literature, Scripture, and as a counselor to her fellow villagers. Some people even paid her for advice. One may say that Wałęsa’s mother was an elder in the village where Wałęsa grew up. Indeed, she became a great influence on his personal development. Wałęsa himself (1987) clearly stated that through the stories she carefully picked for her children, she taught them “to be honest, to strive always to better oneself, to be just, and to call white white and black black” (p. 29).

Gbowee’s mother, too, was an adviser in her village, and people came to her for help in solving their personal issues. Even though there were serious tensions between Gbowee’s parents, they both undoubtedly loved their children. When remembering her childhood, Gbowee (2011) recalled her father as saying: “I know one day you’ll be great” (p. 13). She also recalled a vivid memory of him being by her hospital bedside day and night when she suffered from cholera at the age of eight. Gbowee’s parents quarreled frequently; her father drank and was cheating on his wife with other women, but Gbowee herself says that she “never doubted that [her] father loved [her]” (p. 13), and she wanted to please him most of all.

Like Wałęsa’s, Gbowee’s (2011) mother was also “never physically affectionate” (p. 10). She enjoyed respect in her community and was the first to aid her neighbors, if there was ever the need. Despite her apparent coldness, she encouraged Leymah numerous times to pursue her dreams. In her memoir, Gbowee remembered her mother as saying “I will support you, Leymah. I will help take care of your kids. Until you make something of your life” (p. 72). On another occasion, Gbowee recalled her mother encouraging her to just go on with her life.

“Keep going. Keep going. God is going to help you” (p. 103), she said when Leymah had to return home after an unsuccessful attempt to free herself from being dependent on others.

In both leaders' lives, their mothers played the role of critics as well as nurturers. They were the ones who never hesitated to show Gbowee and Wałęsa the mistakes they made at any points in their lives. They were also the ones whose lack of affection pushed them to seek fulfillment elsewhere than at their family homes. Wałęsa never returned home since he had left it at the age of 15, even though he loved his mother dearly. Gbowee (2011) spoke of her own mother as a “hard woman” (p. 10) and mentioned that “to this day, my sisters and I have a love-hate relationship with her; we can't stand her, but we can't do without her” (p. 10). Parental love, as complex as it is in the case of the two leaders under study, clearly contributed to who they are today.

Happy Childhood

“A good child, but a hard childhood” is how the Kosztowny family, Wałęsas' neighbors, described Lech in a 1982 interview (Ascherson & Szczesiak, 1982, p. 25). Indeed, despite a harsh post-war reality and tensions within the family when his mother married his deceased father's older brother, Wałęsa (1987) still recollected his childhood with a bit of nostalgia:

Today I scarcely know how to tell my children what my own childhood was like, and it is hard for them to understand. Who would have thought that when harvest time came round, we were actually short of bread? ... Yet today I'd love to have another taste of that loaf baked over a wood fire in Dobrzyn. (p. 30)

One of his former instructors, Mr. Gryczewski, recalled him as having “a happy disposition [that] can disarm even the most angry teachers” (Solidarity Members, 1982, p. 28). Craig (1987) also said that “Lech was happy as a child” (p. 89).

Many biographers described Wałęsa as a bit of a bully, but a loveable one. Always excellent in sports and outdoor activities, Wałęsa himself said (in Stetoff, 1992) that he “didn't

really spring to life until the last bell rang” (p. 36) at school. Not a very good student, Wałęsa as a child was always very active, eager to challenge his peers in various physical activities, and he frequently won those challenges. Despite his apparent bullishness, Eringer (1982) described Wałęsa as “a generous lad, known to share the sweet cakes he could afford with his playmates” (22).

Wałęsa’s birthplace hamlet was a small community that met in church and school and provided support to each other on various levels. Lech’s stepfather could always borrow a horse from his neighbor when he needed to go to the market. His mother provided valuable advice to nearby residents regarding all sorts of matters, and circulated books throughout the village. Whoever any of Wałęsa’s biographers spoke with in Popowo, Chalin or Lipno where Wałęsa lived, learned, or worked during his early years, remembers him well. Indeed Wałęsa seems to have left positive memories with most of the people he knew in his childhood.

Likewise, Gbowee’s district in Monrovia provided opportunities for neighbors to support one another to various extents. This is how Gbowee (2011) described life in Africa on a family level: “You may not have much, but there is always someone with less; when rural families send their children to city relatives for ‘opportunity,’ the relatives pay for school uniforms and copybooks, and in return the children work” (p. 11). On a community level, as Hastings (2012) wrote, “in the Liberia of Gbowee’s childhood, people of different religions, ethnicities and languages all lived peacefully in cramped quarters. ‘When one person cried, everyone cried,’ she said. It was true diversity and inclusion” (p. 85).

Gbowee (2011) herself characterized her childhood as a happy one. “Life at home could be hard,” she wrote in her memoir, “but when I think back to the years before the war [which broke out when Leymah had just graduated from high school], more than anything else, I

remember being happy.” (p. 13). She recalled how she and her sisters had their own world in their own shared bedroom – a place where they could always go and just be together when their parents had one of many fights. Gbowee also said that she always had someone to cuddle her, and that frequent power outages in their neighborhood allowed her to interact with many other children. “My cousins would play drums and other girls would shake the *saa-saa* and everyone would try their hand at traditional ethnic dances, while the parents sat on their porches, looking on. It was my home,” Leymah wrote (p. 13, italics hers).

Both leaders had harsh childhoods, because they grew up in uncertain times, when their countries were at historical turning points. Wałęsa grew up in post-war Poland, where communism was just beginning to tighten its grip around the Polish population. During the first eight years of Gbowee’s life Liberia enjoyed relative economic and political stability under the rule of President Tolbert. Yet it was a rule of the majority by an elite minority, which was impossible to maintain in the long run. On March 3, 1980, Tolbert was murdered by Samuel Doe during a coup d’état. This date marks the beginning of a “brutal form of military rule” (Levitt, 2006, p. 512). Doe also politicized ethnicity and this fact led to violence soon after he ascended to power. In relation to such political uncertainty, both Wałęsa and Gbowee experienced the effects quite differently. Wałęsa spent his childhood in a rural area while Gbowee grew up in a large, capital city. Therefore, she was more of an eye witness to Liberia’s history, whereas Wałęsa’s ideas of Poland’s situation came from stories and the news.

Formal and Informal Education

Wałęsa (1987) was an average student, “pretty good at a number of subjects, but never outstanding in any of them” (p. 33). Rather, he preferred hands-on education with tools. This is why he pursued a technical education and stopped as soon as he felt he had learned a trade.

However, education in such small, predominantly rural areas of post-war Poland mainly aimed at preparing local youth for local trade jobs or for work in small, local state-owned enterprises. In fact, Wałęsa was a different lad and never wanted to stay where he grew up. During his first school trip to Gdańsk, when he was only 15 years old, Wałęsa realized that it is ‘out there’ that he wanted to go, ‘out there’ that he wanted to live.

Informally, at home, Wałęsa gained a good moral and religious education that prevented him from listening to ill advice and enabled him to discern good from evil. Also, hard work from early childhood, regular chores to aid the family in their daily struggles, and summer jobs all yielded the ability to support other relatives. Concurrently, these contributions reinforced the perception that a formal education was not really necessary. Additionally, the church, as an entity that was more than just a place to go for Sunday mass, provided significant support to an ailing nation. It became the place where one could feel absolutely free and spiritually enriched and it provided that moral spinal cord a suppressed nation needed so desperately. Wałęsa (1987) wrote clearly about the spiritual role of the church: “The church (...) continued to preach about human rights and moral law. Its recommendations, initially strictly evangelical in tone ... soon [turned] into a practical moral program, embracing all aspects of human life” (p. 96). Wałęsa’s two prodigious patrons made this happen even before he actually met them as a leader of the most powerful peace movement in Central and Eastern Europe.

Operation of these three aspects of an informal education, Lussier (2010) claimed, developed “three core facets of Wałęsa’s upbringing – a capacity for hard work, disdain for book knowledge, and reverence for Catholic faith and institutions” (p. 705). Additionally, as Wałęsa (1987) reminisced, “at our house there were long discussions about the pros and cons of every plan and every decision ... however insignificant” (p. 31). Because Wałęsa grew up with his

mother and step father frequently arguing about many things, but also debating various aspects of a single problem, he gained a deeper understanding of the various shades of conflict. In addition, he learned that there are various approaches to resolving tensions by closely examining both sides.

As opposed to Wałęsa's young-age opinions and his uneducated parents' views, Gbowee matured with an appreciation of formal education and worked very hard to obtain it. At a very early age, Gbowee (2011) developed a passion for learning. In her memoir she stated clearly that she "loved learning, loved stretching [her] mind" (p. 87). She graduated *cum laude* from Mother Patern College of Health Sciences in Monrovia with an Associate degree, and then from Eastern Mennonite University with Master's in peacebuilding. These achievements made her feel very proud. While pursuing an education, she also realized the "purging oneself of pain was only the first step. If a community was to be made whole after war, especially civil war, perpetrators and victims had to come together" (p. 179). Influenced by the writings of Martin Luther King Jr., Mohandas Gandhi, and Hizikias Assefa, Gbowee was and still is an eager student of life and an aspiring scholar. She also plans to study more. Quoting Gbowee in an interview, Frykholm (2011) wrote: "'That is my way of wanting to hide,' she said softly. Then added, 'I want to do a Ph.D. not for myself, but for girls, to show them and my daughters that regardless of where you find yourself in this life, you can still achieve your highest potential'" (p. 36).

Gbowee's life story also provides numerous sources of informal education. Her early work with female victims of rape made her learn the importance of femininity in quelling conflicts. Also, her experience working with boys addicted to alcohol and drugs, and her own struggle to break free from alcohol abuse, provided invaluable lessons in perseverance. Throughout her memoir, Gbowee (2011) frequently mentioned Scripture and the guidance she

received from reading it, which helped shape her own actions. Like many oppressed people who witness injustice done to their mothers and children, she had moments of doubt, moments when her faith eroded. Frykholm (2011) wrote that she felt the heavy weight of “the memory of violence at the church and the church’s helplessness in face of it. And she had little respect for the church’s leaders, whom she saw as degrading women and seeking power” (p. 32). Nevertheless, she still attributes many of her accomplishments to her studies as well as to God.

Although her main task was to teach raped Sierra Leonean women about sexually transmitted diseases, Leymah also practiced peacebuilding with them. Her many conversations with those war victims made her understand the value of home and attachment to locality. After all, so many of these women wanted to return home despite the horrors they had experienced. Additionally, Gbowee (2011) learned a valuable lesson for her future activism from one of the victims she encountered. “This woman knew that her personal tragedy was more than just about her. It was national; it was political” (p. 53). At a time of major violent conflicts individual stories become those of entire groups.

Gbowee also worked with Taylor’s boys – other victims of the civil war – and as a result she broke a vicious circle of her own monsters. In her memoir she wrote: “You see the suffering of others but feel incapable of helping them, and that makes you hate yourself too. The hate makes you sadder, the sadness makes you more helpless, the helplessness fills you with more self-hate” (p. 85). Helping Taylor’s boys enabled her to comprehend that they are not evil and that they too needed help. “They had been exploited, used up, and thrown away,” she wrote (p. 93).

Education played an important role in the lives of the two leaders under study. Wałęsa did not enjoy formal education or books, but Gbowee did and she now enjoys the life of a

scholar-activist. Yet, both leaders managed to translate their life experiences into sources of a significant informal education that strengthened their moral cores.

Prodigious Patrons

Throughout his autobiographies, Wałęsa referred to Karol Wojtyła and Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński as moral leaders and significant influences. Wyszyński, according to Wałęsa (1992) “was the prelate of what [Poles] proclaimed ‘the Church Militant,’ for while the Church had been broken in the USSR and in the other Eastern European countries ... Cardinal Wyszyński still retained the stature of Poland’s principal moral authority” (p. 9). Wałęsa met with him on numerous occasions, “seeking his advice on the important questions” (p. 9). Vinocur (1980) wrote that when meeting Wałęsa after the 1980 Gdańsk accords, Wyszyński gave Wałęsa “a degree of legitimacy unavailable to the Communist Party hierarchy and enhanced his status as the strike leader” (para 3). Wałęsa admitted that through those meetings Wyszyński influenced his moral compass and his attitude towards the nomenclature. Wałęsa (1987) wrote that Wyszyński “viewed [communist leaders] as dependent creatures, condemned by circumstances to be no more than puppets. In his eyes, they deserved compassion” (p. 145). He also remembered Wyszyński saying that “nothing insignificant can achieve freedom” (p. 143)

Wałęsa also met with Pope John Paul II on a number of occasions, but these visits were mainly political and public meetings. This is what Wałęsa (1992) said about the influence of Karol Wojtyła on his activism: “After Martial Law [started] on December 13, 1981, we gathered around our radios every Wednesday to listen to the Pope and every Wednesday [he reassured the Polish people in the] belief that our resistance to communism had moral justification” (p. 10). In his address to Longitudes 06, Wałęsa (2006) said:

Of course, the Pope never encouraged us to carry out any sort of an uprising. He never carried out any sabotage work whatsoever. But what he did was he awoke the Polish

people. He allowed us to realize as we looked around and we saw the communists and also the Secret Police around us [during one of the masses the Pope gave on his pilgrimage to Poland in 1979], he allowed us to realize that they were not true communists at all, that they were just like radishes, red on the outside only, and white inside. (p. 755)

This speaks directly to the source of Wałęsa's struggle to dismantle the communist system in Poland peacefully and to the fact that communists themselves needed to participate in this act. During their meeting in Gdańsk in 1987, Wałęsa (1992) remembered Karol Wojtyła comparing the Solidarity movement to that of Gandhi. The Pope then told Wałęsa: "'If the world grasps what you are trying to do, if it sees in your movement hope and a way to resolve conflicts ... it is precisely because you have renounced violence and let ... the teachings of the Church'" (p. 118) be the guide.

Wałęsa had supportive patrons and so did Gbowee. Indeed, she met individuals who valued her work and who saw potential in her. Thelma Ekiyor – a Nigerian lawyer and activist – is one of the greatest patrons in Gbowee's life. While very different from Gbowee's personality, Ekiyor was the one who quietly, even timidly, helped Gbowee become a true activist. This is what Gbowee (2011) wrote about Ekiyor: "Thelma isn't just my friend; she's my sister, my twin, my shadow self, and someone who understands the political side of me in a way no one else does" (p. 108). Thelma stimulates Leymah intellectually and helps her push her own boundaries. "We have our fights," Gbowee said, "but the love between us is something God himself ordained" (p. 109). Bryan (2011) wrote that "Ekiyor became Gbowee's trainer and friend. She was also the one who announced the launch of WIPNET in Liberia and named Gbowee as coordinator of Liberian Women's Initiative. Gbowee's 'peace-church' philosophical orientation likely can be traced to this era" (para. 11), and Ekiyor became Gbowee's mentor and patron.

Gbowee and Ekiyor published together; they built the women's movement and they stimulate each other, like great friends do. Ekiyor encouraged Gbowee to read and develop her scholarly abilities. Ekiyor (in Raghavan & Birmbaum, 2011) assisted Gbowee in following up on the vision she had experienced in bringing women together to end violence. During an interview with the *Washington Post*, Ekiyor said: "Liberia created a kind of domino effect, where women saw that we can really do something," (para. 26). She was instrumental in co-creating these circumstances. Additionally, Ekiyor was always and still is Gbowee's brainstorming partner. Gbowee (2011), already at WANEP, wrote about those meetings:

We'd become autonomous, and make a couple of organizational changes. We'd add a program aimed at reforming security forces, like armies, police, and immigration and customs officials.... We would focus as much on preventing conflict as we had on dealing with its aftermath, so we'd be doing more than just putting out fires. We would track and document our strategies and actions more systematically than we had before, so we'd be clear on what worked and what didn't and also create a template for other activists to use. (pp. 187-188)

The second person who guided Gbowee to become who she is today is Tunde – the gentle giant in her life. His unconditional love and support helped her pursue the goals she set for her own life. He also saw her potential in education, and helped her make arrangements in life so that she could go back to college. When Leymah had to leave her children and Tunde for a semester to pursue her graduate degree in Virginia, USA at the time when her fame was growing, she attributes a lot of much needed comfort to him. Prior to meeting Tunde in 1994, Gbowee's personal life was a misery. Her marriage with Daniel was a fiction and she sought comfort in work. Tunde appeared in her life at the right time. Bryan (2011) wrote that "an employee of international agencies, [Tunde] had functioned as a father figure for her children for a decade, from the early period of the Liberian women's peace movement through Gbowee's graduate studies (for which he had paid the tuition)" (para. 31). He helped by encouraging her to educate

herself and stimulated her professional growth in the process. Gbowee (2011) wrote that “he offered the kind of encouragement that chipped away at [her] feelings of being stupid and useless” (p. 79).

Critics and Adversaries

In the case of Wałęsa, members of the communist party played the role of critics and, quite literally, adversaries. One prominent member of the regime was General Wojciech Jaruzelski whom Wałęsa met as early in his activist life as in January of 1971. At that time, Jaruzelski was defense minister and negotiated peace with the striking shipyards in Gdansk and Gdynia. Wałęsa (1987) remembered not talking to him then. Ten years later, however, General Jaruzelski became prime minister and defense minister at the same time, which meant that the authorities were getting ready for the possibility of instituting Martial Law. It was approximately six months after Solidarity became a legal trade union in August 1980.

When Jaruzelski, then Prime Minister of Poland, interned Wałęsa in Arłamów, Wałęsa’s guards continuously urged him to write to Jaruzelski and ask for his release. Craig (1987) wrote that “Wałęsa had consistently refused, pointing out that since he had not asked Jaruzelski for his arrest, he would not ask him for his release either” (p. 251). Most of the meetings the two men held ended in no compromise, but Jaruzelski managed to create a split within the Solidarity movement by inviting Wałęsa for a meeting with Cardinal Józef Glemp on November 4, 1981. Wałęsa did not consult this meeting with his colleagues from Solidarity leadership and this created a division within the movement and resulted in more strikes, which ended with the institution of the Martial Law on December 13, 1981. However, it was Jaruzelski who in late 1980s demanded from his Parliament that Solidarity be legalized again as a precondition for mutual compromise between the party and the movement. This was a historic moment that

opened the door to historic Round Table discussions on January 18, 1989 (Wałęsa, 1992, p. 174). Yet after the success of Round Table discussions and the semi-free elections of June 4 1989, opposition to Wałęsa grew even further and began to incorporate some of his previous friends.

Charles Taylor was to Leymah Gbowee what General Jaruzelski was to Lech Wałęsa. Both men were at the helm when Wałęsa and Gbowee felt that they had had enough. However, Taylor met with Gbowee only once, and he did that in public. When he got word that the women's movement was gaining momentum in Liberia in 2003, he banned street marches. This did not prevent the women from protesting, and eventually led to Taylor meeting with them. During this public discussion between Taylor and Gbowee (2011), the former requested that "since he was willing to participate in peace talks, [the women's movement] should demand the same of the rebels" (p. 141). Then he attempted to buy the movement's leaders' loyalty by offering to contribute to the cause. Paradoxically, this same money paid for Leymah and six other members of WIPNET to travel to Ghana and observe the peace talks they themselves contributed to instigating.

During the turbulent beginning of 2003, Taylor was a keen observer of the growing women's movement in Liberia and tried to swing it to his side. However, at first he was irresponsive to the demands of the women. Gbowee (2011) wrote that "Taylor had said that no one would embarrass him, so we did just that" (p. 136). The women moved their protests to Tubman Boulevard, where Taylor drove every day to and from his office. When he still refused to meet with them, the women gathered at the parking lot of the Parliament and gave him another three days within which he was to meet with them. At that point there were so many women that they called themselves the Mass Action for Peace. Taylor eventually met with Gbowee and her women did not end their protest. Like Wałęsa's decision to continue the strike after reaching the

settlement with the shipyard, Gbowee kept protesting because nothing really resulted from meeting with Taylor. As Gbowee claimed, “the Liberian war did not end on the July day [of 2003] when we blocked the hall in Accra.... But what we did marked the beginning of the end” (p. 163). After this peace talks event that gathered representatives of the Liberian warring factions, Taylor eventually resigned and went into exile in Nigeria. Indeed, Gbowee and the women she led ousted the president from his office.

Apprenticeships / Sequences of Success

On the level of literal apprenticeships, Wałęsa was famous for being a ‘golden hand’ – a person able to fix just about anything. Consequently, people would entrust him with their valuables, so repairing items for them consistently gained Wałęsa respect and overall appreciation. Likewise, Gbowee’s drive for education and her tendency to immerse herself fully in everything she undertook (be it work for various organizations or her studies at Mother Patern) helped create this psychological aptitude for involvement. Both, however, had their communities where they observed how others come together, voice their concerns, and act on their oppression, no matter how small those acts were. This is the type of apprenticeship that would later become invaluable. During the time when Wałęsa’s and Gbowee’s movements were taking shape they already knew how to keep them organic.

Favorable Fate

Fate also proved favorable in the lives of the two Nobel Peace Prize laureates under study. It helped both Wałęsa and Gbowee narrowly escape death, for example. Wałęsa (1987, 1992) did not say much about plots against his life, but by 1987 he claimed there had been three attempts to kill him. Had he not evaded the bullet or the poison, he would have become one of

many Polish martyrs. In turn, had Gbowee not hidden the money that one time while returning to Monrovia from one of the field trips, she might have also joined the pantheon of dead heroes.

In addition, fate manifests itself through random occurrences that propel the leader to a position no one else can reach. From the moment Wałęsa (1987) became leader of the Solidarity movement, from the moment he insisted on using non-violent methods to combat the oppressive system, and from the moment the authorities interned him, he caught international attention. Invitations started flowing in, universities began honoring him for his early achievements, and he embarked on his international journey, bearing “witness to [the] movement before the whole world” (p. 164).

Like Wałęsa, Gbowee (2011) got her recognition at the point in time when her country needed her most – during peace talks in Ghana. It was then that Gbowee revealed the Liberian women’s determination to bring about change and manifest their frustration by beginning to undress in front of the male decision-makers. By performing this act and by blocking the negotiating hall, Gbowee and her colleagues sent “out a signal to the world that “we, the Liberian women in Ghana, at this conference, we are fed up with the war, and we are doing this to tell the world we are tired of the killing of our people” (p. 163). By this, the women “marked the beginning of the end” (p. 163) of the bloody war in Liberia.

Yet, the first significant moment in Gbowee’s life that changed her and, as Frykholm (2011) wrote “turned Gbowee from an ambitious teenager with plans for medical school into a traumatized refugee” (p. 32) dates back to late July 1990. Frykholm:

One of [Gbowee’s] uncles had come to the church and told the soldiers holding the refugees hostage that he needed to collect his family. Asked which tribe he belonged to, he had lied and named the tribe to which the soldiers belonged, speaking a few words of their language. They released Gbowee, her mother, and other relatives, warning them not to come back. (p. 32)

The next day, “they proceeded to kill more than 500 men, women and children inside the Church, using machetes, knives and machine guns” (p. 32). From that moment on, Gbowee struggled between her shattered ambitions and a drive for achievement.

Conclusion

Close examination of this prosopographic investigation of Lech Wałęsa’s and Leymah Gbowee’s lives reveals three major influences on their leadership development. Firstly, both leaders of peaceful change had strong mothers, whose reputation extended outside of their immediate households. Protective and not very affectionate to their children on the one hand, but strongly involved in their local communities on the other, the mothers exerted strong influence on the personalities of Wałęsa and Gbowee. Secondly, combination of formal and informal education equipped Wałęsa and Gbowee with a powerful lens and contributed to their uniqueness as leaders. Lastly, each of the two leaders had powerful mentors. Their grandparents and the stories they told young Wałęsa and Gbowee imbued them with what Wałęsa called the ‘gene of freedom.’ Individuals from outside the immediate family environment also contributed to the two leaders’ development as leaders. Karol Wojtyła in the case of Lech Wałęsa and Thelma Ekiyor in the case of Leymah Gbowee were but two peaceful leaders who they looked up to and learned from.

Figure 1 below presents the summary findings for the first of three stages of leadership development as they surface in this work.

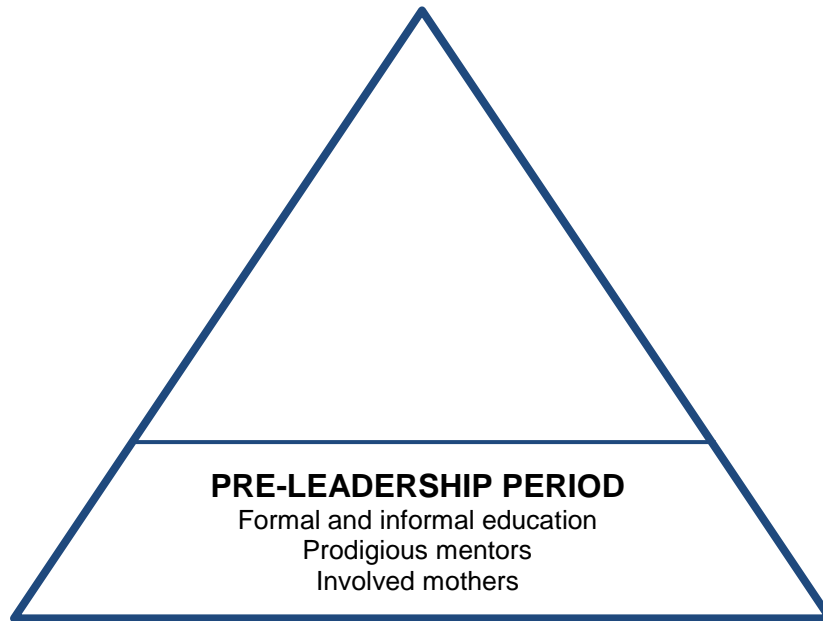


Figure 1: Stages of leadership development: Stage 1 – Pre-Leadership Period

Findings of this study indicate that during childhood and adolescence, people have greater impact on the development of future leaders than events. Mothers, mentors, and teachers exert profound influence on future leaders. Upbringing is also the time when through formal and informal education future leaders learn to critically assess the life around them. The next chapter identifies further stages of leadership development.

CHAPTER FIVE

OVERCOMING SOCIAL OPPRESSIONS

The purpose of this study was to examine the lives of two Nobel Peace Prize laureates – Lech Wałęsa and Leymah Gbowee – who managed to overcome oppression by translating their experiences into leadership for peace. This investigation attempted to find how they responded to violence by peace, forgiveness, gentleness, and reconciliation. The interviews I conducted with both leaders in this study and one additional conversation I had with one of Madam Gbowee’s associates who knew her well generated several themes, which I gathered into three major sections: the pre-leadership period, the active leadership period, and the narratives of legacy. The style I am using in the work says that I should indicate when quotes are through personal communication. Please note that any direct quotes from Lech Wałęsa come from the interview I conducted with him on October 27, 2012 and any direct quotes from Leymah Gbowee come from the interview I conducted with her on April 26, 2013. Direct quotes from Ms. Hafeeza Rashed come from the interview I conducted with her on November 07, 2014.

From Oppression to Pacifism – Pre-leadership Period

This section focuses on both leaders’ paths to leadership, with particular emphasis on what prepared them to become agents of peaceful change. Therefore, this investigation starts from their formative years and ends at the point in time when others grant them the privilege of leading, and reveals the lived, pre-reflective experiences that contributed to these individuals’ leadership.

Intergenerational and Parental Influences

Grandparents and parents of Wałęsa and Gbowee exerted enormous influence on their lives. However, they could not be examples of leadership for them, because they were also

victims of oppression. Furthermore, they had children and grandchildren they needed to protect against the wrongs within their communities. This is why they had to concentrate on developing leadership within their children so that they could possibly make a difference in the future.

Intergenerational influences. Both Wałęsa and Gbowee spoke about their parents and grandparents' oppression. This is what Wałęsa said: "That whole generation, the generation of my predecessors ... was betrayed in 1939, 1945, exsanguinated." Those older generations of Wałęsa's family, including but not limited to his parents, expressed high hopes with regards to his generation becoming change-makers. This is how Wałęsa articulated the hopes of his parents' and grandparents' generations about their children: "if they [the children] managed somehow to break free ... it would be the fulfillment of the forefathers' hopes." Colloquially, Wałęsa referred to this lingering of his parents' and grandparents' own hopes about their children and grandchildren, and implanting within them the drive to change by passing along the "gene of freedom" to them.

Gbowee too spoke about her paternal grandfather who worked as a slave in Fernando Po, and her maternal grandmother's life as a slave girl in an Americo-Liberian home. Consequently, she claimed to owe some of her characteristics to her predecessors. She specifically mentioned her maternal grandmother as a major influencer. This is what she said:

In terms of oppression, my grandmother, my maternal grandmother I would say is an everyday hero to me, because she lived with slaves, so she was a servant, and she lived with free slaves, the Americo-Liberians, she was a servant girl. If you go back to the history of Liberia you would see that in most of the free slaves' homes: I have a three-year-old daughter, so if that was a free slave's home in the past and you see this three-year-old girl and then you see a five-year-old girl, who they would say to the outsiders: this is, we brought her in as her friend, a play mate, but the actual situation is that this is her mid servant. And most times, they started school together, but most times midwee, the slave, the indigenous child, was made to stop school. So that was the situation of my grandmother: she lived in the household for a little girl and she was slightly older, and then she went to school... but she said... because she was smarter the parents of this girl decided that it was time for her to stop school. So she was in the fifth grade, about

twelve years old, twelve-thirteen, when they married her off. So she had her first child between fourteen and fifteen. And as she went to live with this very elderly man, but she was a strong-willed person, and she experienced a lot of violence, and she left the child and ran away.

Parents' oppression. Like their own parents, the parents of Wałęsa and Gbowee experienced oppression first-hand. Wałęsa's parents survived the perils of World War II when they were already adults. At the end of the war, they realized that a new type of oppression was making an entrance: the communist regime. As a child, Wałęsa remembers that there was this "great longing, to break [*speaks with passion*] away from this communism imposed after the end of World War II [*long pause*]. Communism didn't fit [*pause*], even there [*pause*] with the people [*pause*] from the villages [*dramatic pause*]. [*Long pause*]. And so there was also [*pause*] longing there for freedom, for free Poland." During Gbowee's early childhood, her father spent several months in prison. Due to his ethnic background, he experienced oppression from his wife's family. When speaking about her father, Gbowee said: "he would constantly talk about how oppressed [*with emphasis*] and suppressed he was by this family.... They called him a bum.... [And] he still lives with that kind of hurt."

Parents' protection. Because the parents of Wałęsa and Gbowee experienced oppression first-hand, they became protective of their children and never allowed them to participate in their political conversations. Wałęsa said: "Back in the day, children or youth weren't ... allowed to participate in discussions." Gbowee, too, remembers how protective her parents were of their children: "My father was in prison for nine months [*with emphasis*]. It was not until we were teenagers that we got to know that he was in prison for that long." And "our parents were very protective of us, [and kept us away from] all of the systemic issues, all of the traditional harmful practices." The above made our young, future leaders of peaceful change

curious about what their parents were holding back from them, and set them on child-like quests to seek answers.

Thinking outside the box. Wałęsa's and Gbowee's families triggered curiosity within them and contributed to their ability to think outside the box. For example, in the interview Wałęsa attributed his conviction that truth needs confirmation from various sources to his parents' listening to foreign news on short-wave radio and not basing their reasoning solely on just a single piece of propaganda, like most others did. Thanks to this mentality, Wałęsa understood the importance of analyzing information that originated in many minds and locations. Also, because his parents did not see much hope for themselves, he was the one family member who developed a practical approach to life. Adults do not usually expect children to interfere in their private affairs, especially when they argue, let alone distinguish between sense and nonsense in the way they exchange those arguments. However, as a curious and rational child Wałęsa remembers not just having a reasonable outlook, but also being cognizant of the motives that drove both of his parents to their impassioned, often senseless arguments. His understanding of the absurdity of certain human interactions, the need to verify truth, and practical, solution-based viewpoints were the characteristics that made Wałęsa different from most of his peers. "My character was such that the hungrier, the worse it was, the calmer I was. My reactions are opposite to those of others," he said in the interview.

Gbowee also highlighted how important it was for her family, especially her maternal grandmother and her father, for Leymah to grow up to be an independent thinker:

We were told from the get-go that as a woman if your husband brought rice you should bring the charcoal to cook the rice. So ... we were taught from that very early age that you had to meet your world half way. There was never sitting back and allowing the world to meet you. So when we went out to play if someone hits you as a girl and you came back [our grandmother would] tell you go back and fight.

In fact, Gbowee's family actually wanted her and her sisters to be different, stubborn, and they helped them understand the nature of oppression.

Being on the margin. Previous generations helped Wałęsa and Gbowee develop curiosity about their surrounding reality and transferred onto them the need to act on their oppression. Protective but encouraging, they were also responsible for their children's certainty that even though they thought and acted differently from most of their peers, they were on the right path. The fact that they were different and demonstrated a confidence that opposed submission made the laureates see themselves on the margin of their community. Indeed, they were slowly developing into individuals who refused to submit to the ordinary flow. Wałęsa said: "I never listened [to anybody]; I was always free.... [When] I was causing some resistance, well, then I got hit on the head with a ruler and I cried, but I cried because it hurt me." Describing herself and her three sisters Gbowee stated: "we were... not the very typical Liberian girls if you want to call it that.... In the community people used to say: 'don't go to that house, those girls are wild.'"

From Unfair Social Order to Radical Peace-Making

The above influences contributed Wałęsa's and Gbowee's realization that the existing order and social practices were unfair. They began to recognize the need to act on the intergenerational oppression that was taking place in their world. This quality made them different from most of their peers, but they still felt support from previous generations. Their practical and uncommon approaches to solving problems and disputes as well as their characteristic stubbornness set these curious young people off on the path to radicalism.

Unfair social order. Both Wałęsa and Gbowee claimed that they were still young children when they realized that the existing social order did not work, that social divisions

existed, and that their immediate community was not happy with the way the system worked. However, these realizations existed without a full comprehension of the structures of their respective cultures. For this reason, they each first experienced anger. Referring to his childhood observations, Wałęsa stated that “Communism didn’t fit, even there, with the people from the villages.” Yet, nobody seemed to want to do anything about it. “In the villages ... people preferred not to speak out. And then came ... vocational school; ... there was a bit more, but also not so much.”

Similarly, the section of Monrovia where Gbowee grew up carried the name of “a free slave descendant ... even though it wasn’t in the slave era.” Describing her childhood community, Gbowee referred to the largest house in near proximity to her family’s, looking like a mansion on a plantation, and how this made her feel: “at a very early age we knew that there was a difference between us and that house. Yes. And children that live in that house and us.” Gbowee stated that when she “went to school [she] wasn’t being conscious of systemic issues in Liberia.” But she still remembers “being conscious of the patriarchal nature of the social setting.”

Activism. In light of the above, both leaders claimed that their activism and dynamism started at a very early age. Wałęsa said: “I tried ... to take such positions as to duff up communism, to weaken communism, undermine its role.... all my life, starting in childhood, and like me, my generation did as well.” Gbowee also addressed the sources of her active and dynamic approach to the social reality: “I would think that growing up as a child I never really mixed with the group of children. My friends were always friends from my parents’ class.” But as she says, her radical need to change the status quo “started at an early age, but it didn’t start from political issues. It started from social issues... I think that socialization gradually helped

me... and then as I went to [middle] school, [I] became conscious again [*with emphasis*]. I wasn't being conscious of systemic issues in Liberia; I was being conscious of the patriarchal nature of the social setting."

Radicalism. As a consequence of the unfair social order they had observed and their personal energy for change, both leaders progressively radicalized. In case of Wałęsa, his radicalism stemmed directly from being a naughty outcast who went against the norms and reacted differently to ordinary challenges. He said:

The slogans were so-so, but implementation was different, and so I kept falling in trouble and predicaments, resulting from my mindset of being against (*emphasizes and then pauses*) against the situation I lived in. And this is how my whole life actually has until now really been going: in setting myself against what I was growing up with right from the start; ... I was growing up right from the start in family objections against communism.

Gbowee confirmed her gradual process of radicalization by saying: "we were radicalized gradually.... I think, also the radicalization came from the fact that no one ever in my girlhood years told me: because you are a girl, you cannot achieve this." She also said that: "it took many [*with emphasis*] years for me to really get to that place of really saying to myself 'you know what, I think I too can become one of the change that I wish to see.'" The fact that both subjects of this study were stubborn outcasts, that they felt the need to act on their realizations, and that their previous generations injected them with the gene of freedom, turned Wałęsa and Gbowee into young radicals.

Pacifism. Wałęsa's and Gbowee's parents and grandparents felt helpless in combatting their oppressive social reality, but they were hopeful that one day the situation would change for the better. These inspiring family members did not want lives to be sacrificed as they had been during World War II or throughout the coups and repressions Liberia experienced in the 1980s and 1990s. The laureates' relatives believed that killing would not bring about lasting change.

With these hopes and experiences, they contributed to Wałęsa's and Gbowee's early realizations concerning the morality of their current situation, instilling them with the strength and determination to pursue their radical path to change.

In spite of the above, it took Wałęsa a while to get to the conclusion that peaceful solutions were the best ones indeed. In the interview he said that only when he became active in opposition he realized that he and his associates "can only use argumentation, peacefully, perseveringly, to reach success. Then, later ... in the 1980s, I ... tried to solve problems in a peaceful way." Gbowee, too, emphasized the processual aspect of getting from anger to pacifism. She said that "it came from anger towards that particular group to sadness... and really understanding that these people [Taylor's soldiers] are also victims. Just as I feel like I'm a victim, they are also victims, you know." This realization helped her understand that the oppressor was more like her – a victim.

Community Influences

Growing up in an unjust social reality and seeing their parents' inability to act on their own oppression, Wałęsa and Gbowee participated in meetings of their respective communities. Even as young children, they made the effort to interact with others who, like them, felt the profound longing for freedom, and support. Through participation in local gatherings, even during indirect participation in small community-bonding acts of giving and sharing, the two future leaders of peaceful change had a chance to observe what it meant to be together and feel part of something with an organizational structure. For both of them, church provided this essential kind of enrichment.

Faith community. For Wałęsa and Gbowee church was and still is a place where they truly feel free. Wałęsa expresses faith community as a unifying force that provides a sense of

togetherness. In fact, he frequently referred to this community's role in preserving Poland's identity and easing the Polish people's suffering in difficult times.

Gbowee, too, is a member in an active church community. This is how she remembered her early childhood years in this regard:

When I was young and going to church at eight, nine, ten, they would tell us: bring a nickel or a dime every Sunday, because we would take offering for Mandela. At that age I had no idea who this Mandela was and most of the time the prayer was for the freedom of South Africa. There were sermons on social justice, because the church we went to ... was highly engaged with the World Council of Churches.

With its emphasis on collectiveness, providing help to others, and peaceful expression of longing for freedom, church community contributed formatively to Wałęsa's and Gbowee's future roles in pacific movements.

Other Influences

As they matured and began interacting with people other than their families and immediate communities, Wałęsa and Gbowee began to notice the larger picture of their reality through an increasingly critical lens. For Wałęsa it happened when he left his community and moved to the city of Gdańsk at the age of 24. It may seem late for him, but as Wałęsa stated, the communities where he grew up and went to schools were too small for meaningful resistance to take shape. It was only when he arrived in the city of Gdańsk that he began to compare his previous experiences with those that took place in larger domains.

For Gbowee, the maturing moment coincided with a brief political upheaval in Liberia, when she was 13. In 1985, there was a failed coup attempt against president Doe in whose administration Gbowee's father worked. She said: "That was the time that I [*with emphasis*]... and I was thirteen, so that was the time I really became aware of the dynamics." To Gbowee, the

way Doe handled the aftermath of the coup was the moment that helped her truly understand the issues her country faced. Here is how she related it:

And then two hours later the whole situation turned around. The government was back in power and we could breathe easily, and the next thing we knew they now started targeting young people. For me it was an eye-opener to see that we live in a very evil system. That was the beginning of ... getting into [*with emphasis*] the knowledge of the kind of world that we live in.

The role of anger. When they pupated into maturity by stepping out of the comfort zone of their immediate families and communities, Wałęsa and Gbowee directly experienced the violence the authorities exerted on their subjects. In both cases these experiences further intensified their anger. With Wałęsa, this rage occurred during the riots of December 14-22, 1970 when he saw massacres and shootings for the first time. However, in multiple sources Wałęsa stated that anger has accompanied him since childhood. Moreover, when he actually witnessed violence, it became a driving force of his courage. Essentially, the direct experience of brutality pushed Wałęsa to the frontlines of the struggle.

Like Wałęsa, Gbowee identified anger as the main feeling behind her early actions. She made this sentiment more pronouncedly during the dissertation interview. When addressing the question of what made her decide to act on her oppression during the Civil War, Gbowee said: “What drove me to that point was anger. I was a very angry person.” Elsewhere, also referring to how she felt when the Civil War started very soon upon her graduation from high school, Gbowee said: “In the beginning I was very [*with emphasis*] angry, and all I wanted to do was to take a gun also and kill someone.... I mean you get to the peak of the anger.... And that anger increased” with time.

Focus on peaceful change. Both Wałęsa and Gbowee began to focus on peaceful change when they interacted with other mature individuals, even though they were still angry. It

is, therefore, possible to assert that with their past experiences as children, when the two leaders of peaceful change directly experienced violence and became enraged at the way oppressors attempted to defend the existing status quo, they discovered peace through their new community. With this support, they are able to channel their anger into action for peaceful change. During the interview, Wałęsa asserted that

until 1980, and maybe even a little earlier, I thought that violence should be responded to with violence. Only when I was already in opposition, with meeting of Borusewicz and others I got convinced that it was the communists who were better at violence; that we would never win with them if we bet on violence.

Like Wałęsa, Gbowee also began to focus on peaceful solutions as a result of her interactions with others. Running trauma healing workshops with villagers who had suffered the horrible consequences of the war made her realize that she could become useful in the process of community healing. However, unlike Wałęsa whose pacifism came about solely as a result of his contact with the people whom the system oppressed, Gbowee also experienced her awakening to peace when working with her new community that paradoxically included the oppressors themselves. This is how she described her transformation:

I tell people God has a sense of humor; because it was at that point that these are some of the people that I really hated and I have to work with them, design programs for trauma healing for them, do all kinds of things with them. And then I get to recognize and realize that some of these boys were recruited at eight, seven years they were virtually babies when they were given guns. Today they have one leg, one arm, but working with them in that kind of intimate setting [*with emphasis*] you get to understand and you get to know them for who they truly were.... And then ... I think I've come to a place where there is more equality for them, and more understanding of where they found themselves.

This experience helped Gbowee channel her negative emotions toward the oppressor. From anger to sadness, to understanding, she gradually realized that oppressors were victims, too. As someone who had also suffered due to violence in her country, Gbowee understood that the oppressor and the victim can be one and the same, and they both deserve peace.

As young adults, Wałęsa and Gbowee met people they had had no relation with before and they realized that some of those individuals were also out on their own personal quests to find answers to grand questions. Together, they formed new communities that helped them understand that their anger can transform into action for peace. As a result, they were no longer stubborn, but quick to decide. Not purely curious, both leaders wanted to find ways to promote positive changes for everyone in their regions. No longer outsiders, these two talented people developed into trustworthy leaders.

Conclusion

Wałęsa and Gbowee successfully created peaceful change as a result of many factors coming together. Many people exerted direct influences on their progression to their eventual harmonious leadership, starting with parents and their own interpretations of the reality at a young age. Then came community influences, interactions with the elders, and finally contacts with totally new people who helped the two laureates under study realize that a peaceful approach is the only right way. Their anger, lined with the hopes of their predecessors and coupled with direct experience of violence, became subduable, especially when people began to gravitate toward them. The next section discusses what influenced Gbowee's and Wałęsa's active leadership and how they managed to promote peace.

Active Leadership Period

The second research question aimed to identify the common influences of the two leaders that caused them to promote peace in their respective regions and throughout the world. Therefore, this section reveals how the four main influences (Critical awareness; Focus on the cause; Sense of purpose; and Faith) this study identified inform Wałęsa's and Gbowee's leadership and made them uniquely qualified leaders for peaceful change. Because the purpose

is to describe those common influences, this section departs from direct chronology while still focusing on the period of Wałęsa's and Gbowee's lives from the moment when they became leaders of movements for peaceful change to the time they managed to overcome oppression.

Critical Awareness

Both subjects of this study, still active in their pursuits, understand the historical and local conditions under which they operate; they, indeed, comprehend their time and space. This notion helps the two leaders grasp the larger picture of their respective causes. "Everything needs to be placed in time and space" Wałęsa claimed in the interview. He then explained the 'space' factor: "You need to place it where you want this leader to be, because this person can be a great leader in Poland, but not manage in America and the other way around." This factor, according to Wałęsa, relates very strongly to the social situation at hand in a particular time: "So it must be placed in time, and this applies everywhere.... Back in my times, one needed to have more dams [*with emphasis*], more courage, and reconnaissance.... Now, a leader must be different: more educated, more social."

Ms. Hafeeza Rashed, then assistant to Madam Gbowee, confirmed this with a definite "yes" and added that this factor of time and space also makes leaders of peaceful change realize that there is a "need to extend local activism beyond locality." Therefore, refined products of oppression should be acutely aware of current and past issues the societies they represent face. They should also possess or develop such characteristics that will respond to these issues, because this approach helps set goals and see opportunities. Wałęsa asserted: "Goals [and] opportunities are different [in different times and places], and the revolutionary is good for those particular times." Additionally, the two refined products of oppression worked very hard to make the entire world aware of the struggle.

Wałęsa and Gbowee were always different from the majority of their peers in that they were stubborn and curious. Furthermore, they understood that a single source can never provide objective information. Finally, they each had the gene of freedom that informed their pursuits. Because their parents had never suppressed these characteristics, when they left the comfort of their homes and communities encouraging others who thought like them, both leaders realized that they possessed critical understandings of their respective social realities. In the interview, Wałęsa said that “majority [of Solidarity leaders were] not able to play this game [of overcoming oppression].” When talking about the bloody events of December 1970, Wałęsa said:

On the second day I figured ... that [*with emphasis*] there was no hope for any victory, because I didn't know people, we didn't know one another, even in top [strike] leadership circles. What's more, we didn't know how to really fight against this communist system, we didn't know why, so in fact we had no chance to win, absolutely no chance at all [*with emphasis*] to win.

This is why Solidarity as a growing movement needed Wałęsa to decide when it made sense to oppose the oppressor and when it did not. Wałęsa also understood what the oppressor would do in particular situations: “I was the leader, I led that strike. I didn't really very much admit to this, but the reason for it was that if I was too wise, too good in this they would have to liquidate me.” Additionally, Wałęsa understood the people he led. Mieczysław Wachowski, long-time friend and now president of the Lech Wałęsa Institute wrote about Wałęsa that he had this acute understanding of what people felt and managed to use this power to cement the crowds. He claimed that with Wałęsa ordinary people finally had the voice (see Wałęsa, 1987, p. 174).

Ms. Rashed confirmed the finding of understanding the motives of all sides of the conflict and the feeling the power balance at hand. Talking about Gbowee, Rashed said: “She has an incredible ability to recognize the kind of motives and motivations of those whose actions may be doing harm as well as recognizing the motives of those who are direct recipients of that

harm.” As for the unique capacity to understand the members of the movement, hesitantly (Gbowee does not know how to talk about herself), Gbowee said: “It is difficult for me to describe myself. But I think I’m that person that helps people find... I have the ability to get people to do [*with emphasis*] and to see what they’ve never seen before, and to find their unique qualities and skills.” Wałęsa and Gbowee became cognizant of their critical awareness at the time when they began interacting with their peers who, consequently, granted them the privilege to lead.

Focus on the Cause

At that point, all Wałęsa’s and Gbowee’s past and present experiences came together and zeroed in on what was important for their predecessors and contemporaries: overcoming oppression in a peaceful way. Now practicing leaders, Wałęsa and Gbowee understood what was most important for members of the movement, even if it seemed counterintuitive to the majority of them. Wałęsa spoke about going against convictions of the majority of people who supported him. He discussed, talked, convinced, and pushed the regime to yielding and sitting at the round table with him to shape the future of the Poland of peace, not war even though many did not want to include communist authorities in this process: “I fought on any and all positions, in any moment, I used every opportunity. But no, no, it was not deception, it was not game-playing, it was a conviction that this needed to be done.” Wałęsa did fear for his life, but his focus helped him move on and advance the cause to the point that when the world awarded him the Nobel Prize in Peace he considered this recognition as a reward for the entire movement and the cause: “Although it was really for me personally ... for leading, but I have treated it like for the whole movement, I distributed the money and everything” that the Prize carried along with it. Even though he became political due to the nature of issues he was trying to solve, Wałęsa as a

leader did not seek a political career until it became necessary in order to advance the cause. Long after the events of 1980 he ran for president of Poland, but, as he said in the interview: “I didn’t want to be president, but looking at what was happening and what was going on with our colleagues, I came to a conclusion that they don’t have a clear idea.” He continued: “After some calculations, I decided to finish off communism, and I could only achieve this by becoming president.” Wałęsa was ready to battle communism from every position he ever occupied – a regular worker in a factory or the president of Poland.

Gbowee also explicitly stated that a political career was never something she considered natural: “I know I’m a politician, but I have not brought myself to say to myself: ‘I’m going to step into the political space....’ I love my work, I love what I do, and this is what I want to do.” When President Johnson Sirleaf invited her to lunch with the implication that she would be offering her a position in the Liberian government, Gbowee did not accept the proposal because she did not see herself as a government functionary.

Like Wałęsa, Gbowee also considered the Nobel Prize as recognition of the movement she led, not her own accomplishments. When talking about Gbowee, Ms. Rashed clearly stated that “when Madam Gbowee accepted the Nobel Prize she did not use ‘I’ – she spoke on behalf of others.” When describing Gbowee’s main characteristics as a leader, Rashed said that thanks to her focus on the cause Gbowee “is able to recognize the right push-points and opportunities.”

Sense of Purpose

Wałęsa and Gbowee became strong, stayed on track, and took personal responsibility for the movements they led. They acted seriously and methodically keeping in mind the safety of all sides, and used every opportunity to corner the oppressor. By receiving legitimacy of others to

lead them, they understood that attaining the common goal requires responsible actions. All of the above became the building blocks of their strong sense of purpose.

Thanks to having the sense of purpose, Wałęsa drew strength from the crowds he led to attain their common goal of freedom and peace. He also claimed that the sense of purpose helped him take full responsibility for the entire movement. He said: “I didn’t listen to anybody, I led this struggle decisively, I led single-handedly.” He became certain that he acted in the right way: “I set myself in such a way that, really, that other side couldn’t do anything, because I was right.... I didn’t let go, didn’t relent. Such was my character, well, I never relented, when I was right of course, I never hit my head against the wall, and didn’t overact.” The sense of purpose also helped Wałęsa remain calm. He said: “people panic, and I the other way around: the harder it is the, the calmer I am searching for solutions.” In addition, Wałęsa spoke about aligning his personal goals with those of the public. This is why, he added: “I pushed the opponents against the wall, to say it in short. And in this way I didn’t let anybody trap me and as a rule I generally won almost everything.” Also, he mentioned: “I worked on how to get out of the situation. How not to get beaten up, and at the same time to attain the goal.”

Likewise, when talking about Gbowee’s core values, how they match her actions, and how much strength her sense of purpose gives her, Ms. Rashed said that Gbowee “is always on.” When describing how her objectives made her feel responsible, Gbowee said: “you can’t be a pessimist, and you can’t be tired, because ... there is expectation.” She also said that “the reason why I like to be in the field is because it reminds me of my calling. I don’t see this as a job; I see it as a calling.” Aware that Gbowee is reluctant to speak about herself, Rashed confirmed the above by saying that Gbowee “often talks about work in peacebuilding and conflict resolution as a calling and she takes that responsibility very seriously.” She also said that Gbowee “is very

resolute in her core values and that speaks to all her abilities,” which informs the conviction about doing the right thing. Rashed also confirmed numerous times that Gbowee is very consistent in her pursuits: “Continuity in her worldview speaks to her authenticity,” Rashed said and added that “her personal and professional issues match public ones.” Gbowee, too, addressed this idea quite explicitly: “people like me and many others are the hope for our communities. And when you look at those people, and look at them, see, when they see you then hope lights up in their eyes.” She added: “It has to do with all of those people that are dependent on how you go out there and how you represent your community.”

Faith

Both leaders in this study consider faith as a basis of all great struggles. Wałęsa asserted: “I don’t believe in great, huge struggles without faith.” He also added: “we were in difficult circumstances but ... without strong faith I would have broken down.”

Gbowee is also a deeply religious person. She said: “I’m a Christian, I believe in Jesus the Reason, the Lord and Savior” and explained how her faith is a base for her by referring to Yoder’s (1972/1994) claim that Jesus was a social advocate and alluding that her pursuits stem from her admiration of Jesus. When talking about Gbowee, Ms. Rashed stated that Gbowee “is a very deeply religious woman.... Her base is strong.” Rashed also said that for Gbowee, faith is “a tool for clarifying the next steps and for going back to tradition, contextualizing, and finding the best way to move forward.”

Faith enables the entire struggle to be transcendent and powerful, but it also makes leaders humble. Wałęsa addressed this in his 1992 autobiography where he wrote extensively about his great respect for Poland’s history of many exceptional leaders, which made him deeply humble and even inferior to those historical figures of peace. Gbowee spoke directly about her

humility during the interview. She said: “From a long time ago I tell God every day that: ‘keep me humble.’” She also said: “I’ve always wanted to be hungry and I’ve always wanted to be grounded, because that [*with emphasis*] is the reminder that this is not a day’s job; it has nothing [*louder, with emphasis*] to do with you.” Due to their humility, the two leaders of peaceful change consider themselves to be ordinary individuals who can do extraordinary things with other ordinary people.

As strong believers, Wałęsa and Gbowee managed to conquer their fears. Wałęsa stated: “...faith, the Almighty, makes it possible to come to the conclusions I had come to back then. You can kill me, of course, but not defeat me.” Aware that the oppressor might attempt to assassinate him, especially in two such occurrences, Wałęsa still said: “I reckoned too, that they may hit me, and the struggle needs to be led on, so I encouraged each and all ... those in the front and those in general, to keep striving, so that we achieve, that’s right, victory.” Gbowee too said that she did not fear speaking against bad practices, especially by those whose primary function is to serve, i.e. the church and the government:

sometimes in my own church I challenge the authorities of the Church, because I say: ‘our faith is a useless faith if we’re not following the politics of the Jesus that we say we serve,’ and the politics of that Jesus was never [*with emphasis*] silent in the face of oppression, suppression. He was never silent when governments were corrupt. He didn’t care whether they liked Him, whether they were leaders of the day like Him. For Him, He had to speak the truth [*with emphasis*] to power and to authority and he had to do it to those who needed it. So that’s where I find myself.

Faith also triggers a belief in humanity and conviction that anybody can do good. Wałęsa and Gbowee even saw that villain leaders had the potential to be great. Wałęsa said: “... and this is where later we get those Stalins, Castros and others, because they were excellent, probably, but, they began to deal under the table, wanted to take shortcuts, and democracy is based on different principles.” When talking about Charles Taylor, and this quote also relates to

compassion, Gbowee said: “Even with Charles Taylor: I don’t feel apathy for him, I feel pity [*with emphasis*], and that’s a totally different thing, because he is someone who could have been one of the greatest leaders of our time. And he is going to go down, or has gone down in history as a villain.” Gbowee confirmed that everybody can perform good deeds by saying: “I believe in humanity, I believe in everyone’s ability to do good.”

As strong believers, Wałęsa and Gbowee easily rejected temptations of the more powerful haves to give up the struggle and become like them. In both cases, faith helped resist temptations and focus on acting from the heart. Wałęsa said:

without strong faith ... I would be bribed, because I had so many offers, which ... would make it simpler. If I succumbed to temptations from here and there, or if I tilted, I would let them take advantage of me, and that’s why without faith I wouldn’t have achieved anything. I would have sooner or later fallen.

Gbowee also spoke about how she acted from her convictions, like Jesus, on compassion: “And [*pauses*] I see a lot of [*slowly, thoughtfully*] issues [*pauses*], but I tend to go for issues when my heart tells me: this is the issue for you to go to,” she said.

Both Wałęsa and Gbowee are aware that people believe in different things and that their faith does not necessarily have to be religious. When discussing faith as a base of all struggles, Wałęsa said: “base [the struggle] on some faith, because people believe in different things.” To that end, Gbowee said: “I also understand that the other religions, groups, have similar issues when it comes to peace, and justice, and ... humanity, so I’m one person who does not judge anyone.”

Conclusion

Wałęsa and Gbowee are critically aware individuals. This ability makes them understand the motives of all actors, recognize the larger picture of their struggle, and sense the needs of those they lead. They also focus on the cause and do not take interest in personal gain.

Sometimes they are ready to go against what other members of their movement want, but they make it absolutely clear that accolade and international recognition goes to all. They have a sense of purpose that helps them stay on track, act right, and take full responsibility for the entire struggle and for the safety of all who play a role in it. Their strong faith makes legitimate their conviction that this struggle is larger than life. At the same time, faith helps our leaders remain humble despite the anger they may feel. Thanks to strong faith, those leaders of peaceful change lose fear, begin to believe in humanity, and acquire the conviction that everyone, oppressors too, is capable of making a positive difference in society. Faith also helps them resist temptations. Together, the four characteristics enable Wałęsa and Gbowee to stand out as examples of leaders whose style aims at promoting peace. The next section presents narratives of both leaders' legacy.

Narratives of Legacy

Reception of the Nobel Peace Prize marks the point when the world acknowledges the two leaders of peaceful change, and locally-acting refined products of oppression, as world-class leaders. International media followed both leaders' struggles quite attentively throughout the years of their active service, but it is that very recognition that elevated them to iconic levels. However, as critically aware people who focus on the cause, both leaders understand that world approval is a responsibility, not an ultimate goal that helps them retire.

As accomplished leaders, both Wałęsa and Gbowee instantly became visionaries who continue their focus on the cause and try to advance it further. They left the past behind with no regrets and continuously focus on the future of humanity. Therefore, they do not miss the moments when they were peaceful revolutionaries working on changing the status quo for the better. Once their movements gained momentum and ended oppression in their respective

countries, they focused on more peace-building work (Gbowee) and on creating proper institutions within the new order (Wałęsa), instead of pursuing and persecuting the perpetrators. In fact, both aimed at including rather than excluding the oppressors in post-conflict realities. Wałęsa and Gbowee continue their work to change the wrong dynamics of our contemporary world; they transfer their activism from their local cause onto the entire world. Both leaders of this study addressed a number of questions that pertained to their character, beliefs, and leadership. Here are some of their common stories.

Leaders' Character

When discussing their own character, Wałęsa and Gbowee addressed their uniqueness that stemmed from their childhood experiences. Furthermore, they discussed how fuelling their sense of purpose helped them strengthen their convictions to do the right thing. Wałęsa said in the interview, quotes above, that he never panicked and that he was skillful at cornering the oppressor because he knew that he was right. He told the following story to support his argument:

I even had this occurrence with the priest who taught me religion, because back in my times religion was taught [*at schools*]. I don't quite remember what it was about, but he told me something that was not how truth was. Then I followed him for a month [*pauses*], saying: 'Dear Father, that's not how it is' and he, after a month, pissed off, said: 'Boy, with a character like this you will either end up in jail or somewhere very far up.' But he acknowledged I had been right [*makes a long pause*], because I didn't let go, didn't relent. Such was my character, well, I never relented, when I was right of course, I never hit my head against the wall, and didn't overact.... I was searching for arguments; I pushed the opponents against the wall, to say it in short. And in this way I didn't let anybody trap me and as a rule I generally won almost everything and I could only be salvaged when the opponents could say 'no,' [*pauses*], just 'no,' with the arguments I always had, because I always tried to have better ones.

Gbowee, too, spoke about her unique abilities. She said: "I think ... I have the ability to get people to do [*with emphasis*] and to see what they've never seen before, and to find their

unique qualities and skills.” Like Wałęsa’s, Gbowee’s uniqueness reinforced her sense of purpose. This is how she addressed this concept:

From a long time ago I tell God every day that: keep me humble, because there is no way you can, trust me, it’s a difficult thing when... and the reason why I like to be in the field is because it reminds me of my calling. I don’t see this as a job; I see it as a calling. So I go into the community and continue to work in the community, because it reminds me not the sweets that you live in ... but this is the reason why [*with emphasis*], you started in the first place and this is the reason why you need to keep grounded.

What Lech Wałęsa and Leymah Gbowee Believe in

Faith formed the basis of Wałęsa’s and Gbowee’s struggles. Without faith they would not prevail. Without faith, they would not be strong and their struggle would not be absolute. Without faith, they would not be humble and compassionate. This is what Wałęsa said about his faith:

Faith has led me to what we have now.... I don’t believe in great, huge struggles without faith, I don’t believe in this. It is unbearable. There are too many traps, too much injustice, or even, threat to life. A person wouldn’t have been able to bear it... However [*with emphasis*], faith, the Almighty, makes it possible to come to the conclusions I had come to back then. You can kill me, of course, but not defeat me [*with emphasis*]. Faith can be, really, base it on any belief, because people believe in different things. Me [*pauses*], on this Christian faith I was able to achieve this – without faith I wouldn’t manage. I would have fallen – sooner or later.

Gbowee, too, attributed much of who she is and how she approaches her work to her faith. This is what she said:

I’m a Christian, I believe in Jesus, the Reason, Lord, and Savior.... One person said when Jesus was on Earth He passed many places and He saw many sick people, but He healed just some, not all. And He did that when He felt compassion [*with emphasis*].... I say: ‘our faith is a useless faith if we’re not following the politics of the Jesus that we say we serve,’ and the politics of that Jesus was never [*with detectable emphasis*] silent in the face of oppression, suppression.... So, that’s where I find myself [*pauses*]. And because of that ... I also understand that the other religions ... have similar issues when it comes to peace and justice, so I’m one person who does not judge anyone.... I believe in humanity, I believe in everyone’s ability to do good. Most time I tell people, those in prison and us, the difference between us and them is that they took the anger and put it in a very violent container and we take ours every day and make a conscious effort to put it in a peaceful container.

Lech Wałęsa and Leymah Gbowee on How They Lead

The way Wałęsa and Gbowee led relates directly to their critical consciousness, sense of purpose, and ability to navigate their movements with confidence and patience, which stem from their deep understanding of others' hopes. Here is what Wałęsa said:

On the second day of the strike of 1970 I figured that we [had] no chance to win, absolutely no chance at all [*with emphasis*] to win [*pauses*]. So at the same time I watched what the authorities were doing: they were provoking, they wanted to bleed us a little. They wanted us, those most courageous ones, to either eliminate us or generally let go from the shipyard with a clause 'dangerous' for these sorts of political reasons [*pauses*], and this is why I began by myself, in person, to inhibit my colleagues' aspirations [*with emphasis*], to spare them and get ready because that moment, year 1970, was not possible to win.... Just at the right moment I said: 'No, no, gentlemen, this struggle is possible to be won, but this struggle must be prepared.' I need time, we need time to prepare, exactly those 10 years, and then, drawing conclusions from 1970, which I drew.... and the lessons that back then [*pauses*] it was possible to [*pauses*] draw from all those [*pauses*] meetings, and as a result of all this I learned a few things, and it helped me prepare well for year 1980. And in 1980 ... I didn't listen to anybody, I led this struggle decisively [*pauses*], I led single-handedly, because I knew [*pauses*] that there were many betrayals ... and simultaneously also [*pauses*] pushing to winning.... I was most prepared back then, to lead the cause on behalf of all those people who [*pauses*] were in my community.... using every moment to shift the bar toward freedom.

Here is how Gbowee addressed her own leadership style:

For certain people anger will never go away. You have to go join, find that healing. It's, it's so [*with emphasis*] pronounced.... I think it's due to a lot of anger.... And then you also have the whole generation of children, of child soldiers who our children will have to be dealing with. And they have that chip on their shoulders that their fathers worked, or fought for the freedom of your people [*with emphasis*]. What story to give them; they are children; they will be asking questions, right? ... I've said this from yesterday until today: 'our challenge or the challenge of these children to the children of combatants is how ... we write the history of the Civil War in Liberia so that there is an understanding that, that all of us [*pauses*] were commanders who drove their fathers to fight. You know, one of the things I tell people is that we live in an optimistic or pessimistic world. And people like me [*slowly, thoughtfully*] and many others are the hope for our communities [*pauses*]. And when you look at those people, and look at them, see, when they see you then hope lights up in their eyes. You can't be [*pauses*] a pessimist and you can't be tired.... I've always wanted to be hungry and I've always wanted to be grounded, because that [*with emphasis*] is the reminder... that this is not a day's job; it has nothing [*louder, with emphasis*] to do with you. It has to do with all of those people that are either dependent on how you go out there and how you represent your community.

What Keeps Them Moving

Both leaders of peaceful change will be active for the rest of their lives. What drives them is the optimistic need to keep inventing new and creative solutions to our world's problems while keeping in mind that they still represent the community they had built during their active struggles. Here is how Wałęsa described what keeps him going:

This struggle of ours has led to the fact that we are making a single country, Europe.... and because as one of the originators of this situation I'm trying to convince any and all to create new programs, search for new structures, which, due to the tasks at hand, that are greater than in the arrangement of nation-state [*pauses*]. For these reasons, [*pauses*], I would like to keep winning, but while building, because I proved to be different, we proved excellent, but in dismantling the old, bad order. But after dismantling the old order one must build both new systems and different programs, quite distinctly different from current ones. And this is a dilemma ... within our generation, that we don't have programs, we don't have structures, that we are going the old way [*thoughtfully*], and it is too little as for our great victory [*makes a long pause*]. I am trying everywhere where it is only possible, to say all this.

Here is what Gbowee had to say about what drives her:

It has to do with all of those people that are dependent on how you go out there and how you represent your community.... I'll give you a quick recent story. The youth are doing a clean-up campaign in Monrovia. And I decide I'll go and do clean-up with them. So the Mayor of Monrovia, one of the political leaders, and I got there and they had police and this, and that. And these kids are in the quarters calling me. So I jump in the trash with one of the boys and then he said: 'Madam Gbowee you need gloves, and you need a face mask.' But none of these children have it, and the Senator is ready to put on his gloves and his face mask and the Mayor has her face mask and her gloves and they are trying to have this mess handled... None of these young people have gloves or face masks, so why... If it is unhygienic for them [*louder, with emphasis*], why do we have children doing this work. So I'm there and we clean and clean, and one of the little boys came close to me [*pauses*] and he said: 'Madam Gbowee, when I heard you're coming I signed up for this work, because I want to ask you a question.' I said: 'Go ahead, sweetie.' And he said: 'is it true that [*pauses*] during the war, aah, you used to sell doughnuts as a refugee? So I said: 'Yes, I used to sell doughnuts at a refugee camp.' I used to make doughnuts and sell doughnuts and he runs, and I say: 'Come back, come back, what's happening?' And he said: 'You wouldn't know the strong one, would you? If you sold doughnuts, and you are here today, I, too, can be what I want to be' [*with a strong emotional charge, pausing*]. That's [*excitedly*] the only confirmation I wanted from him [*pauses with emphasis*]. He left. So why would I [*pauses*] not be [*pauses*] optimistic about life? So that's the fire, that's the drive.

A strong conviction that their job is not over, even after the cause they devoted their entire lives to has concluded, drives the two leaders of peaceful change. As a vocation, their leadership for peaceful change will end when they pass, not a day before.

Conclusion

By showing their path from oppression to pacifism, by identifying common influences that informed Wałęsa's and Gbowee's leadership, and by sharing their personal narratives, this work illustrates how international leaders overcome difficult social conditions. Starting from an analysis of their formative years and ending with a look at common characteristics in their life stories that informed their leadership, the purpose of this chapter was to bring together the themes that emerged as a result of this qualitative investigation.

The three major features in the way Wałęsa and Gbowee led their movements during the period of active leadership are: a continuous focus on their goals, understanding the fundamental role their faith played, and community involvement in the struggle. It is achievement of change through peaceful means that guided their actions. Having their predecessors' hopes as part of their identity and staying true to what they had believed in helped maintain that focus. The two leaders in this study attributed the success of their struggle for peaceful change to three major factors: faith, focus, and community involvement.

The previous two chapters brought together answers to this study's three research questions and addressed the rationales behind the lived experience of Lech Wałęsa and Leymah Gbowee that made them respond to oppression with pacific behaviors. They revealed the common influences of the two leaders that caused them to promote peace in their respective regions and throughout the world. Finally, they identified the common elements in the laureates' life stories that affected their leadership.

Figure 2 below presents the three stages of leadership development that results from the two chapters above.

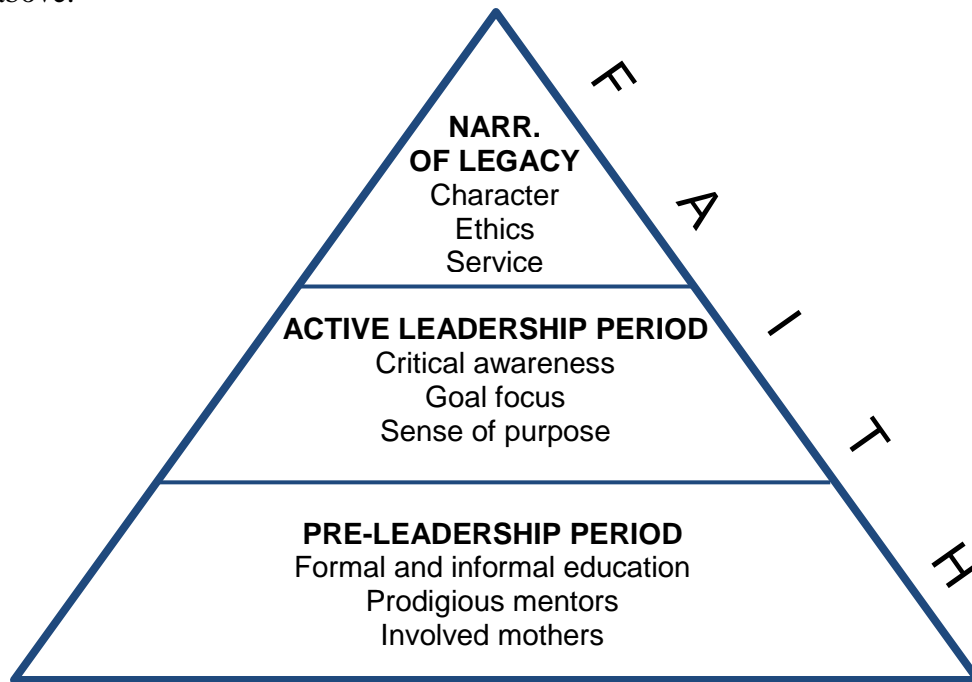


Figure 2: Stages of leadership development

Findings of this study indicate that during active leadership period leaders gain critical awareness of the social reality around them. As a result of influences in their formative years, leaders also acquire the sense of purpose and remain in focus while struggling to change the status quo. After they achieve success, they continue their service with emphasis of ethics and strength of character. Faith is the guiding light throughout their entire lives, findings show. The next chapter presents theoretical analysis of these findings and presents implications and recommendations the current study generates.

CHAPTER SIX

THEORETICAL ANALYSIS

Leaders whom the world recognizes as change agents grew up in various social and political realities. Lech Wałęsa and Leymah Gbowee matured in conditions that posed threats to them and their communities, but they managed to identify and act on opportunities to make a significant difference. This study was about how they managed to overcome oppression and become leaders of peaceful change for themselves, their peers, and their nations. Because of their actions, they received the ultimate recognition that elevated them to the stature of living icons. As such, they have a chance to share their experiences with other oppressed people around the world and make a positive impact on their lives.

As an exploratory study of biography and leadership development, this study examined lived experiences and focused on the chronological (i.e. processual) exploration of paths to leadership. The present chapter analyzes the findings of this examination in light of theories used in its initial phase. After all, theories of oppression and counter-oppression provided the groundwork for this study and a theoretical framework for the entire course of this investigation. Consequently, this section shows aspects of Lech Wałęsa's and Leymah Gbowee's biographies that contribute to the style of leadership they practice. I present those aspects in form of a set of characteristics that inform the actions and deeds of a refined product of oppression. By definition, this profile encompasses an individual who, despite growing up under oppression, finds will and courage to change the existing status quo for the good of herself or himself and others. Additionally, this chapter analyzes the major emerging themes from both the written and narrative data of the study as they relate to the following theories: Shoup's Exemplary Leadership, Gil's Non-Oppressive Social Order, Goldenberg's Social Intervention, and

Greenleaf's Servant Leadership. Three major sections encompass the study's emerging themes, which I analyze in accordance with the progression of Wałęsa's and Gbowee's leadership, including their pre-leadership periods, the active leadership periods, and the subsequent leadership legacies.

Pre-Leadership Period

Findings of this study revealed that patrons, i.e. the parents of both leaders and individuals in their respective communities, greatly impacted how Wałęsa and Gbowee perceive the world in which they live. In particular, their mothers instilled within them the sense of responsibility toward the injustices of which they were each victims. Besides parents, various members of their communities weighed on shaping the mentalities of the two future leaders through various social interactions. Also impactful were contacts with totally new people who helped the two leaders under study realize that a peaceful approach is the only right way.

For the purpose of this study, I used Shoup's (2005) understanding of prosopography as "a collective biography" (p. 12). As Shoup stated, "a prosopography on a group of leaders from various fields will allow timeless principles for developing leaders to emerge and provide a comprehensive context to understand the emergence and practice of leadership" (p. 12). After analyzing numerous biographies and autobiographies of world-class leaders, the author asserted that "seven properties or categories were consistent among [them]" (p. 27). These are: involved parents, childhood experiences, formal and informal education, prodigious patrons, critics and adversaries, successful mini-apprenticeships, and a favorable fate. Chapter Four of this work considered all of Shoup's categories and presented a collective biography of Lech Wałęsa and Leymah Gbowee.

One of the most important elements of the path to leadership is the presence and influence of parents. According to Shoup, parents should stress the importance of being ambitious, they should provide early examples of leadership, and they must develop within their children the sense of order and security. In addition, these guardians should have clear expectations that their children will do something meaningful with their lives, and be ready to lend an ear to their children when they are in crisis.

Shoup (2005) also emphasized the pivotal role of the entire community where the leaders matured for the development of healthy adulthoods. The community is the future leaders' group of patrons and critics. Furthermore, it provides an initial space where future leaders can show their skills by means of providing mini-services while also strengthening their apprenticeship capabilities. The author stated that "to raise children to grow up to be healthy adults, it appears a village of active participants concerned for the welfare of each child helps tremendously" (p. 32).

However, of all living influencers, mothers have the greatest impact on future leaders. Shoup (2005) clearly stated in his extensive study of twelve leaders revealed that "a common denominator among all the leaders was a strong attachment and involvement with their mothers" (p. 27). It is the mothers that contribute to the depth of leaders' childhood experiences; they introduce them to their immediate communities; they are the future leaders' patrons and friendly critics.

Discussion

As Shoup posited in his prosopography, the parents of the two leaders played a significant role in providing them with the protection necessary to grow in a society that was otherwise unfriendly and oppressive. In particular, their mothers imparted a love for justice and fairness, and gave their children the strength to continue battling their evils both as individuals

and as leaders. Shoup also argued that devoted patrons and the impact of an individual within a community can make young minds pursue destinies that promote goodness for all. This is the case with the grandparents of both leaders as well as the churches that both leaders in this study attended. During the interview for the purpose of this project, Wałęsa remembered how previous generations instilled within him what he calls the ‘gene of freedom.’ Gbowee, too, stressed the importance of previous generations serving as first heroes (as stated in chapter 4).

Church was also the place where the future leaders could hear the uncensored truth about their social reality. Wałęsa confirmed this fact to be tremendously important for his leadership development. He also claimed that the church also provided an actual program for peaceful change. Gbowee told me that her church intensively preached for social justice.

For all of the above reasons, Shoup’s claim that the path to peaceful leadership has to pass through individuals and communities whose influence may be overt or tacit, but it remains unquestionable in its justification. The findings of this study showed that thanks to family and community influences, Lech Wałęsa and Leymah Gbowee became aware of the unfair social order early in their lives. Curious and open-minded, but too young to understand their oppression, they developed the sense of bewilderment because of the reality around them. This estrangement led to anger and then an awakening of the call to act on the intergenerational oppression that was taking place in their worlds. Both leaders of this study grew up with their mothers’ stories of oppression and they also experienced it first-hand. Oppression in the immediate family and community as well as stories of previous and current generations’ inability to overcome this obstacle triggered Wałęsa and Gbowee’s engagement to fight their respective oppressive realities.

Wałęsa's and Gbowee's parents satiated them with hopes of abolishing the existing status quo. Their communities showed them how to come together and organize in order to conquer abuse. At school and at home, they began to act on their oppression by being stubborn and persistent in their insistence on not giving in to the pressure to submit to the oppressive reality imposed upon them. In order for a movement against oppression to become successful, acts of opposition must begin in the most familiar of settings, i.e. in the future leaders' minds – on the cognitive-affective level. It is there where all stories and experiences live and exert a direct impact on their attitudes. Hence, influences of the most important individuals in young lives bear crucial impact on their leadership development. After all, implicit and explicit messages in those stories become sources of energy for future leaders to move forward with their positive objectives.

This study revealed that Wałęsa's mother provided him a sense of honesty, drive for self-improvement, and helped him realize the importance of being just. Wałęsa was also fortunate to have the guidance of Poland's historical figures (Karol Wojtyła and Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński), who offered him the additional moral compass for his leadership. Similarly, Gbowee's mother taught her to not give up during the lowest moments in her life and to keep pursuing her dreams. The patrons Gbowee encountered stimulated her intellectually and helped her grow as a professional peace activist (Thelma Ekiyor and Tunde, respectively, as stated in chapter 4).

Through direct interaction with other community members at church, at home through engagement with living members of the family, and through stories about the generations that passed on, the two future leaders of peaceful change understood what it means to be actively together. Inner hopes and desires of the previous generations somehow magically transformed within them into the need to act on behalf of or under influence of their most loved ones – the

generations of their parents and grandparents. Because these consequential relatives did not object to their activism, the leaders became certain that they had legitimacy to act. As children of protective parents whose generation experienced oppression first-hand, the two Nobel Peace Prize laureates under study grew up as curious individuals capable of thinking differently than most of their peers and be proud of this display of courage. Intentionally or not, Wałęsa's and Gbowee's previous generations supported them in their otherness and stubborn pursuits. Therefore, it seems that they charged their children and grandchildren with changing the status quo of their repressive societies. All these would soon help them name what they unknowingly romanticized themselves, and actually begin to act on this realization.

Shoup's (2005) prosopography lists seven vital influences that shape individuals' development as leaders. To some extent, every one of them becomes an important factor in the period of leaders' lives before they become organizers of significant movements. Involved parents, especially mothers, are the guardians of the depth that develops in their children's early experiences. As a result, they ensure the quality of their children's formal and informal education. Therefore, these essential life guides take on the role of the future leaders' patrons and critics. In turn, the communities they introduce their children to are instant sources of their initial apprenticeships and become mini-worlds where they can develop and practice their future skills as leaders.

Active Leadership Period

Critical Awareness

Results of this study indicate a number of factors that contributed to Wałęsa's and Gbowee's leadership during the period when they were active leaders. One important facet of this development is that both laureates possessed critical awareness of their social realities. The

ability that both leaders had acquired during their childhoods and adolescence helped them understand both sides of the conflict very well. As representatives of the oppressed groups, they had a natural ability to empathize with their followers on the one hand, but they also understood the motives of the oppressors on the other. This key knowledge equipped them with the ability to predict the oppressor's actions and the subtle capacity to determine when it made sense to oppose oppression without hesitation.

As critically aware individuals, both subjects of this study understood the historical and local conditions under which they operated; they indeed comprehended their time and space. This helped those leaders attain a larger view of the cause they led. Therefore, during their active period, these leaders were constantly and acutely aware of current and past issues the society they represented faced. Furthermore, each of the laureates possessed and/or developed such characteristics that would respond to these cultural conflicts. Because of this approach, both leaders had the sophisticated ability to set goals, see crucial opportunities, and understand the dynamics at hand. Wałęsa spoke about how important it is to be firmly set in the given time and space, and Gbowee confirmed this concept while adding that it is vital to extend the cause beyond locality. Indeed, both leaders managed to overcome their respective oppressions on peaceful terms, thanks to their unique abilities to assess the realities in which they worked with a critical eye.

In his work, Gil (1998) presented nine strategies for overcoming oppression. According to the author, during the process of effecting change, leaders must set long-term and short-term goals, articulate a vision of the future, build movements, apply critical consciousness, develop the politics of the common human needs, transform the consciousness of people and nature, create alternative institutions, endorse equality, and promote quality. The values of stewardship,

organization of work, exchange the production of work, governance and legitimation, as well as biological reproduction, all deeply affect how fair the post-oppressive order becomes. In this sense, Gil's research was about institutionalizing post-oppressive reality. As an advice on the methods and strategies of overcoming oppression, Gil's work postulated that development of the "patterns of actions, interactions, and social relations" (p. 35) is a vital component of a non-oppressive social order. For this notion to take shape, though, leaders as well as societies must develop "processes of consciousness which underlie, motivate, and facilitate" (p. 38) those methods. This is why development of critical consciousness is an inevitable element of the process – in fact it is its *conditio sine qua non*.

Discussion

As critically aware individuals, Wałęsa and Gbowee became uniquely capable of leading their followers to peace. Their uniqueness and a strong sense of purpose turned them into trustworthy leaders. Both leaders of peaceful change have a particular way of understanding their reality and forces that fuel it. They reveal precisely the kind of consciousness that, according to Gil, is directly opposite to what their societies had been conditioned to embrace. Such awareness helped them choose the right approach to change. Gbowee and Wałęsa knew or felt their oppositeness, and so they continue to lead making clear that their actions reflected the expectations of those they help.

Wałęsa and Gbowee saw the larger pictures of their respective social realities at different points of their lives. Each and all of the influences I listed above, and will list below, contributed to this wider view. After all, critical perspective of one's surrounding reality does not come to everyone naturally. When he was 24, Wałęsa began to verify his ideas with those who lived and worked in the shipyards of a large town of Gdańsk, Poland, and proved to understand the grander

scheme. In the case of Gbowee, it was when she realized that the government her father had been employed by for so many years turned against its own youth that she opened her eyes on the oppressive reality she lived in. For both leaders under study, the ability to see the bigger pictures became strong and maturing experiences.

Indeed, it was when the two Nobel Peace Prize laureates (now mature and aware enough not to just recognize that injustice exists, but also to understand it and become radical opponents of it) met people who thought in the same way as they did that this awareness and radicalism became political. This was the time when they began to realize that many others had similar feelings and that their previous experiences were like those of many others. Most importantly, it was also at that point that they realized that violence is not the way to go about changing the status quo. In other words, when they met other people and exchanged ideas with them, that they became radical peace-makers, whose understanding of the worlds' dynamics and how the past interacts with the present now began to make sense for the future.

Critical awareness also helps choose the right way to act. Both Wałęsa and Gbowee knew that freedom and change do not come suddenly and is not an instant occurrence. In addition, the two leaders used their movements as organic tools for social change. After the short-lasting victory of Solidarity over the communist regime, namely at the time when Solidarity became a legal entity immediately following the August 1980 events, Wałęsa knew that many individuals would come with their demands, including extreme ones. Thanks to his instinctive understanding that most members of Solidarity wanted peaceful solutions, he insisted on remaining moderate (as mentioned in chapter 5). Instinctively, he knew what was good for the movement and what its opponents wanted as an outcome. For this reason, he felt that power lay in the rational approach that Gil promoted for peaceful solutions.

Critical awareness also pushed Gbowee to act in a decisive moment of her movement's time. Her refusal to leave the hall of the peace negotiations site in Accra contributed to speeding the process. Her Mass Action for Peace movement became a success partially because of Gbowee's certainty that what they were doing was right, and her strong conviction that it was the only thing to do in the given situation. Understanding the mechanics of conflict resolution and using their critical awareness, both leaders continued to work hard on bringing peace to the world.

Wałęsa's and Gbowee's critical approach to countering oppression was fresh. Neither Wałęsa's nor Gbowee's movements drew their energies on vengeance, even though this was what seemed to be the only solution. They insisted and continue to insist on forgiveness and involvement of both sides of the conflict in the peace-building process. Early in 1990, just over six months after the 1989 roundtable discussions and the first partially free elections of June 4, 1989, Wałęsa clearly stated that history, not guns would punish the perpetrators. While running the Trauma Healing Workshops, Gbowee taught women to translate their anger into forgiveness. The level of discipline displayed by both laureates does require critical awareness to come to such conclusions. Indeed, critical awareness is a crucial element of the long and arduous process of effecting peaceful change.

Both leaders focus on the cause and do not take interest in personal gain. Sometimes they are ready to go against what other members of the movement they lead want, though they eventually ascribe all accolade and international recognition to all. In line with Gil's position that critical awareness is a pre-requisite for moving peace-making from the level of ideas to the level of action, both Wałęsa and Gbowee acted and thought critically throughout the entire course of their struggles. They do possess the unique ability of understanding the context and

seeing the larger picture of their struggle. Thanks to critical awareness, they understand the motives of all sides of the conflict. Therefore, they know how and when to act and vengeance does not drive them. That is because they understand it is also in the oppressor's best interest to end the abusive circumstances.

Leaders' alternative consciousness, as Gil (1998) described critical awareness, is essential to peaceful social change. The author stated clearly that "unless shifts in consciousness cause individuals and groups to evolve new patterns of actions and social relations, the process of social change would be stalled on the level of ideas" (p. 57). According to Gil, only those societies that operate under non-oppressive conditions are able to grow and develop. The author understands, however, that building such societies requires leadership whose characteristics include critical awareness. Gil also made it clear that building non-oppressive social order is a lengthy and strenuous process, and that it requires critically aware leaders to inject perseverance and patience in their followers. They understand and inform the members of their group that "critical consciousness, and actions based on it, may be crucial to a meaningful future for the human species" (p. 49).

Different Approaches to Peaceful Change

As critically aware individuals who understood their respective realities better than their followers, Wałęsa and Gbowee took different critical approaches to peaceful change. After all, their realities differed so much. For this reason, Wałęsa was able to maneuver between the two sides of the conflict on a constant basis, attempting to extract concessions and help the oppressive system dismantle itself. Conversely, Gbowee needed to intervene in a more radical way.

The nature of oppression explains why leaders take certain types of approaches to conflict resolution leaders. Here, Goldenberg's (1978) study is useful in stressing the importance of social intervention for changing existing oppressive status quo. The author's work also helped to understand the tactics leaders choose to undertake. Goldenberg claimed that three interventions are necessary for social change to take place: collective action, institutional focus, and "orientation toward altering existing practices and priorities" (p. 17). Social intervention, according to Goldenberg, also has five dimensions: alignment of change agents' values with those of the existing system; belief in the need for change; identification of the source of leaders' agency; understanding of the process of people's interpretation of their condition; and belief that it is possible to change the system by peaceful means. The author listed four main orientations that help understand how in varying circumstances one can achieve peace. In order from the most conservative to the most radical, these are: 'social technician,' 'traditional social reformer,' 'social interventionist,' as well as 'social revolutionary' (p. 20). What unites the middle two approaches is that 'traditional social reformer' and 'social interventionist' believe in the possibility of peaceful change and seek "to 'turn people onto' the personal, interpersonal, and/or intragroup dynamics that define some of their problems" (p. 19). Therefore, hope is integral in guiding those two approaches. Interestingly, none of the other tactics believes in the possibility that peace can actually happen.

Discussion

Goldenberg's (1978) social interventionism helped define Wałęsa as a 'traditional social reformer' or one who is an eternal negotiator and who constantly seeks to form alliances across the social divide. The fact that during his active leadership period Wałęsa operated in the state of peace explains why this critical approach seemed the best for the times. Gbowee, on the other

hand, would become a ‘social interventionist’ or one who feels an urge to abolish the social institutions that perpetrated the recurring state of civil war in Liberia. Gbowee’s focus remained on the culture of war that came to dominate in her country. This was why she needed to appeal to traditional symbolism and cultural beliefs to help the warring factions realize that they misunderstood their own metaphors.

Wałęsa saw the need to form alliances with those in power so as to achieve a calm transition from an intrinsically violent system to an extrinsically peaceful one. For obvious reasons of violence being external, explicitly and directly exercised on human body via civil war, Gbowee could not work in the same way, but had to turn to the guardians of peace – women – as natural allies in her struggle. Within or outside the system, women became the hope of the battling nation.

However, despite the fact that each leader took a different orientation to peacefully dismantling oppression, they had a lot in common in the execution of their leadership. Both leaders attracted others to their cause because of their personal character and the values they exhibited. Also, both exhibited an ethical approach to peaceful change. Their personal character and strong value system made others want to follow them. After all, in the condition of oppression and systemic abuse, people need truly exemplary leaders who act in a directly opposite way than those in power do.

Wałęsa and Gbowee built their new communities in order to gain support and achieve the sense of togetherness while executing their individual approaches to peaceful change on the example of the communities they had interacted with as children. These new communities soon became massive movements for peace, and Wałęsa and Gbowee led them responsibly. With critical consciousness that informed so much of their character as leaders, Wałęsa and Gbowee

remained in focus until victory. It fuelled their perseverance and helped choose an all-inclusive agenda. Even as a social interventionist, Gbowee helped all Liberians define their own issues. After all, oppressors themselves were the same people as those they oppressed.

Both leaders also used collective action as a means to overcome their oppressions and both acted on “faith that the powerful will surrender some of their influence in the interests of their own survival” (Goldenberg, 1978, p. 25). Wałęsa and Gbowee engaged themselves in activities to incite the members of their movements as well as those on the opposite side to take the matters into their own hands and act to dismantle oppression. Although Wałęsa did see himself as a leader of a mass movement, he appointed many individuals to numerous leadership positions within the organization. He also insisted that they participate in the negotiations with the authorities. Gbowee also never acted alone, but sought counsel of the more experienced colleagues, and listened more than issued decisions single-handedly. In other words, both leaders developed the sense of agency within those they were leading and identified with their cause. Even though Gbowee’s movement did not carry the name ‘Solidarity,’ the very identification with what had sparked resistance among the women gave them the power to act. When the war in Liberia ended, the women wanted to be “dealing nonviolently with defenders of the status quo [and] engaging in non-violent, extended, consciousness-expanding social transformation efforts, following armed struggles” (Gil, 1998, p. 63). Indeed, this positive action is what earned Gbowee and all members of the movement the highest honor – the Nobel Prize in Peace.

Leading ethically and confidently, actively participating in the movements they created, and driving collective action in unison with others, is what Wałęsa and Gbowee – social interventionists – did as critically aware leaders. Thanks to their critical awareness, both leaders

chose the best way to act on their oppression and led their movements to ultimate victory. They knew when it made sense to act on their oppression through collective means. They were also able to predict their oppressors' actions.

Narratives of Legacy

Character

Now that Wałęsa and Gbowee achieved their goals and managed to make effective changes to the social reality in their respective countries, they have the ability to look back and reminisce about what influenced their actions. Both confirmed that personal character helped them remain patient in their pursuits. They knew that effecting peaceful change does not happen overnight. Through their experiences, they can now agitate and recruit others for action toward equality and democracy over extensive period of time. Without a strong focus on the cause change would not be possible. After all, alterations in attitude require patience, perseverance, and full devotion. It also means having a restless focus on the pursuit of long-term goals.

Wałęsa and Gbowee described their character in the latter part of the previous chapter of this work. Wałęsa spoke about never acquiescing and always staying calm. He also knew that millions were behind him, so he always had stronger arguments. Gbowee spoke about her calling and working on behalf of other members of her cause. Both leaders know that the communities they represent feel the need to forgive and include their oppressors in the process of purging their respective countries of oppression. Neither Gbowee nor Wałęsa wanted to prosecute their oppressors without due process (see p. 103 and p.132 above). Solidarity's insistence on the discussion table being round so that nobody sits with their backs to anybody else proved the inclusive nature of the movement. When the war in Liberia ended, Gbowee insisted that everybody participated in the process of re-establishing order (see pp. 49-50 above).

In his work on servant leadership, Greenleaf (1977/2002) listed many characteristics a true leader should possess. The author began with a statement that great leaders must be servants first. They do not act on impulses, but are “always searching, listening, expecting that a better wheel for these times is in the making” (p. 23), and they choose the best way to overcome oppression with their people, “making their way to their goal by one action at a time” (p. 45). Indeed, they understand that serving for the betterment of society requires time and effort. It also requires initiative, focus, and restlessness. They challenge injustice. They understand that societal quality is reasonably achievable. They take issue with institutions that are there to serve the society, but fail to do so in reality. They understand that it is people who grant leadership, not leaders who take it. Greenleaf posited that servant leaders are busy people whose initiative helps ground the followers and focus them on the positive outcome of their pursuits. This requires leaders to have the “armor of confidence in facing the unknown” (p. 41). After all, during their struggles, leaders do not yet know whether they would be successful, so they need to have a vision and be able to articulate it correctly. Furthermore, their role is to give strength to followers by showing them that they are sure this vision will one day become a reality. To demonstrate that objective, servant leaders use tempting language that opens the door of perception and contributes to their persuasive approaches. Consequently, they help others define their own needs while guiding group members to express how they want to be served.

As Greenleaf (1977/2002) posited, those who are not cognizant of the contemporary world’s dynamics need leaders who “have *a sense for the unknowable* and [are] able to *foresee the unforeseeable*” (p. 35, italics his). Critical consciousness, alternative consciousness, or intuitive insight is what makes servant leaders unique. It helps them be aware of the problem,

see the positive end of the struggle, and establish goals for all individuals who are involved in the process of change.

The author also said that a servant-leader must exhibit his or her “own unlimited liability for a quite specific community-related group” (Greenleaf, 1977/2002, p. 53). Through community and with community, servant leaders seek their own healing. They believe that change first happens within a community and then across society. With this mindset, servant leaders give strength to each individual member of the movement they manage. After all, “Servant as leader,” the author said, “always empathizes” (p. 33) and empathy “is the imaginative projection of one’s own consciousness into another being” (p. 33). As a result, the servant leader needs a strong character to be able to project such compassion and share it with thousands of others. Indeed, the effort requires initiative, faith, awareness, and hard work.

Discussion

This work confirms that servant leadership fits the way Wałęsa and Gbowee led and helps describe the motivation behind the peaceful leadership behaviors of the two Nobel Peace Prize laureates. Like Greenleaf’s servant-leaders, Wałęsa and Gbowee were conscious of the injustices their respective institutions levied upon their people. Still, their primary motivation was to serve the population rather than to help themselves. In fact, they were awarded the Prize for acting on behalf of others. In the third part of the previous chapter, Wałęsa was clear in his statement that he would like to continue triumphing for the good of humanity and discovering new solutions to contemporary problems. Gbowee, again, iterated that what drives her is the fact that there are so many people who are still dependent on the success of her activities.

The laureates in this study lived stories of oppression. They also listened and heard the voices of other oppressed people. This keen awareness helped them realize that they needed to

act. Gbowee experienced oppression by the war and through her toxic partner. She traveled to remote villages in Liberia to talk to women, to help them heal by listening to them. Even though Wałęsa was weary of the inhumane conditions he had to work under, he still made the decision to extend the strike of August 1980. Though the authorities had accepted all shipyard workers' postulates, Wałęsa decided that the strike would continue precisely because he listened to what other workers in other enterprises needed so desperately – dignity. In fact both leaders fought for this very basic human right and both listened with great care to what those they led had to say.

Each of the two laureates in this study referred to intuitive insight as significant in their pursuits. Gbowee transformed from talking to doing when she saw the degree of desperation in Liberian women during the civil war. Her concerns inspired her to organize the 'shedding of the weight' workshops and inciting women to act on their misery. In April 2003 when the movement was taking clear shape and once it became dangerous for all its members, Gbowee realized that Liberian women had to come together in the truest sense and demand peace. Indeed, it was clear to Gbowee that these women had each other as a source of strength. Also, during one of the most decisive moments in his life, Wałęsa realized that if anything were to be achieved, it was up to him to do it. This realization happened at the time when shipyard employees could return to work since the authorities agreed to all the postulates of August 1980.

To be effective, Wałęsa and Gbowee both remember where they came from and whom they represent at all times. Greenleaf (1977/2002) addressed this liability and stressed that peace-making is an inclusive process. Neither Wałęsa nor Gbowee turned a blind eye on anything or anybody in the process of effecting peaceful change. Wałęsa knows instinctively what is good for the given movement and what is in the best interest of its opponents. He feels

that power lies in a rational approach. This method continues to impress both sides of any conflict – a precondition for peaceful solutions. Gbowee keeps sharing her experience with women around the world who find themselves in the middle of conflict zones. Understanding the mechanics of conflict resolution, using their past experiences, and keeping in mind where they each came from, both leaders continue to work hard in order to bring peace to the world. Because Gbowee decided to run the Trauma Healing workshops or organize women for action against the war in Liberia and for peace, it is understandable that she was acting in the service of other oppressed women. Similarly, Wałęsa could not bear the miserable working conditions in Poland's industrial complexes. He understood the mechanisms that the authorities used to squeeze more out of already exhausted workers and decided it was time to stop the abuse. Always intuitively knowing what people need and always in the center of events, Wałęsa took the role of game changer upon himself to improve his community.

Many actions the laureates in this examination took exhibit characteristics of servant leaders. They serve others. They listen. They understand. They know where they came from. Indeed, Wałęsa and Gbowee have the intuitive insight that helps them represent their communities and constantly search for new solutions as part of their ongoing work. This is in fact what fuels their ongoing energy to keep working on behalf of the oppressed.

Faith

Wałęsa and Gbowee both addressed their faith and ethics when discussing their legacy in the latter part of the previous chapter of this work. Wałęsa stated explicitly that he would not be able to achieve anything without faith as his base. Moreover, he made a point to explain the use of every possible moment to advance the cause on behalf of the community of oppressed workers. He also told me that faith gave him a power that was larger than life. As a strong

believer with a spiritual core he was unbeatable. In turn, Gbowee stated expressly that her faith is strong (as stated in chapter 5) and listed those elements from Jesus' life that she kept in mind at all time throughout her struggles. She, indeed, sees Him as the ultimate activist for social justice and her faith in Jesus remains a guiding force of her own actions. It is from Him that she learned that leaders of great causes are never silent when it comes to any and all kinds of oppression. As a leader, she knows that hopes of her community drive her optimism and empower her to keep forging ahead. It is the same motivation that Jesus had. Indeed, faith has always been a prerequisite for Wałęsa and Gbowee. It enabled them to act on oppression, promptly providing them with strength and fueling their devotion to the struggle. As critically aware leaders who remember the lessons their mothers had taught them, who are stubborn believers that their cause will conclude with success, Wałęsa and Gbowee became *secular missionaries*.

Almost all scholars who provided the theoretical foundations of this study address faith as an important factor in leadership development. Goldenberg (1978) asserted that leaders of peaceful change act on faith. Gil (1998) spoke of faith as a source of devotion to the cause that turns leaders into *secular missionaries*. Also, both authors of the analytical theories that informed this study address the crucial role of faith. Greenleaf (1977/2002) asserted that faith turns leaders into seekers, individuals who are in constant pursuit of solutions. This requires not just believing in past prophecies, but to “see current prophecy within the context of past wisdom” (p. 22). After all, the past is a source of wisdom and the present opens opportunities for the future. Acting while constantly analyzing the past and present to seek solutions for the future “is partially a matter of faith,” Greenleaf claimed (p. 39). Faith, according to the author, gives rhythm to activism, whereby leaders continuously ponder “the whole gamut of events from

indefinite past, through the present moment, to the indefinite future. One is at once, in every moment of time, historian, contemporary analyst, and prophet” (pp. 38-39).

Greenleaf (1977/2002) also emphasized that faith offers validity to leaders’ instinctive decisions, is a source of wisdom, and helps remove doubt. From Greenleaf we also learn that strong faith elevates leaders to saint-like, wise figures. Furthermore, Greenleaf suggested that faith enables these individuals to see opportunity in every loss while forging ahead to the ultimate goal. When faith guides them, leaders are “raised above the possibility of hurt,” the author writes (p. 340).

According to Shoup (2005), “when the mission for one’s life [aligns with] a religious belief system, a foundation for exemplary leadership to emerge is [there,] as leaders internalize a sense of calling or obligation to do great things or be great” (p. 68). In the case of Wałęsa and Gbowee, strong faith underlies those very intentions and makes them genuine. Because they felt the same frustrations as other members of the movements they led, they could strongly identify with the pain the people they led felt. Shoup (2005) also asserted that faith is an important element in leaders’ lives. According to the author, “inherited faith would serve as an anchor and, at some critical times, a returning point for strength and guidance” (p. 30). Indeed, Shoup asserted that “formal religious involvement serves as a starting point for some sort of moral compass to develop that distinguishes leaders as exemplary” (p. 31). Also, Shoup’s study showed that “the religious foundation and moral voice served as a strange attractor, a center reference point in which actions and decisions were kept in a relative and patterned range amongst the competing demands, values and dilemmas associated with leadership” (p. 31). Hence, faith is an indispensable element of exemplary and servant leadership. Along with critical awareness, it guides leaders through the complexity of peaceful change for millions.

Discussion

Findings of this study show that faith makes the struggle spiritual and larger-than-life. Both Wałęsa and Gbowee see faith as something bigger and more encompassing than individual human beings. It becomes an empowering and humbling factor. When talking about the reasons why he thinks that there are so few true leaders who really fit in their time and space, Wałęsa claimed that this is because most ambitious leaders lack humility. Faith, according to the two leaders in this study, is the characteristic that turns anger into a positive feeling. It made Wałęsa and Gbowee channel their anger for the good of others. Yet no matter if the anger is fuelling the offensive or the defensive, it must reflect the rage of the entire movement and combine with the hope that better times are coming for all.

Indeed, strong faith is both the source of energy for seeking peaceful solutions to the struggle (Greenleaf, 1977/2002) and a guiding light for remaining ethical in those pursuits (Shoup, 2005). People gravitated toward Wałęsa and Gbowee because of their ability to focus on the cause, because of their critical awareness of the situation, and because of their strong faith. In order to remain humble and strong, and continue to represent their important causes, those leaders also need the guiding light: something that helps them to remain sane and fearless. In essence, it is unwavering faith. Without genuine and strong faith, leaders cannot facilitate great struggles and social movements. Thanks to their strong faith, the two leaders under study believed in everyone's ability to do good and involved both sides of the conflict in their respective peaceful struggles. Once the world awarded them with the Nobel Peace Prize, the two laureates set out on a mission (Gil, 1998) to further advance their cause, work on changing the world's dynamics, and focus on the future of humanity.

Lech Wałęsa and Leymah Roberta Gbowee as refined products of oppression are humble, ordinary people who are critically aware and whose faith drives their motivation to change the bad into the good. Not necessarily religious (both emphasized that faith does not have to be channeled through religious belief), faith helped them resist temptations and properly channel anger. As long as we live our lives in such a way as not to have regrets and feel that we are doing the best work possible, we are all refined products of oppression. Indeed, faith is a critical component of exemplary leadership.

Faith is indeed a factor that researchers of paths to peaceful leadership cannot disregard in their studies. This chapter presented major tenets of four theories (Shoup's prosopography, Gil's (1998) non-oppressive social order, Goldenberg's (1978) social interventionism, and Greenleaf's servant leadership), and each referred to faith as a major factor in leadership development on all of the stages. This final section of theoretical analysis presented the role of faith across those theories, as it informs much of the actions, attitudes, and behaviors of the two leaders' lives.

Conclusion

Shoup's (2005) study of leaders helps classify Lech Wałęsa and Leymah Gbowee in the category of exemplary leaders. Those leaders have "ethical ends in mind and [practice] the ethical means to the end" (p. 9). People admire them. Additionally, exemplary leaders are "influential and widely recognized for their accomplishments.... [Their] personal character and values make them truly exemplary" (pp. 19-20). According to Shoup, these leaders develop their sense of purpose (calling) at the time when they depart from their immediate communities and step into the wider world, which matches the findings of this study.

In his notion of servant leadership, Greenleaf (1977/2002) focused on the characteristics servant leaders should possess. Unsurprisingly, the findings of this study confirmed that they indeed influence their *modus operandi*. Both leaders' inner motivation was that of service. Wałęsa even named it as a 'gene of freedom' – a craving previous generations transferred onto young Wałęsa and Gbowee and informed their drive to act for change in service to their predecessors and contemporaries. Both Wałęsa and Gbowee acted on the premise of “searching, listening, and expecting that better times are coming” (p. 23). They were able to sense and understand signals from their respective environments and translate them into confidence in the positive quality of the unknown. Indeed, they exhibited intuitive insight, a sense of understanding the unknown, courage to approach the unexplored, and a unique ability to predict the unforeseeable. They also used a language that tempted the members of their movements to name their experiences and act on them in positive ways. Both were aware of what they could achieve at any point in time with the resources they had available. Findings of this study show that feelings, such as empathy, foresight, and awareness that Greenleaf ascribes to servant leaders, also influenced Wałęsa and Gbowee.

It is all of the above elements of Shoup's and Greenleaf's notions that inform the two leaders' character and the type of leadership they practice, including the way they continue to work around the clock and around the world. With the use of theoretical concepts, this study based its premises on, and with support of their own quotes, this part of the study shows the legacy of Lech Wałęsa and Leymah Gbowee. For the world, both leaders are now examples of effectiveness and living icons of peaceful change. Indeed, they are refined products of oppression.

The two leaders in this study attributed the success of their struggle for peaceful change to three major factors: faith, focus, and community involvement. The previous two chapters brought together answers to the three research questions of this study and addressed the rationales behind the lived experience of Lech Wałęsa and Leymah Gbowee, identifying how they responded to oppression with pacific behaviors. Furthermore, these chapters also revealed the common influences of the two leaders that caused them to promote peace in their respective regions and throughout the world. Finally, my previous chapters identified the common characteristics in their life stories that affected their leadership. Figure 3 below presents stages of leadership development and identifies the theories that informed each of them.



Figure 3: Stages of leadership development: Theories

As the figure above shows, Shoup's (2005) prosopography was the main source in identifying influences in leaders' upbringing. Works by Gil (1998) and Goldenberg (1978) helped to find influences during leaders' active period. Finally, Greenleaf (1977/2002) showed what guides the actions of leaders who already achieved success. The next chapter summarizes the findings and presents implications and recommendations the current study generates.

CHAPTER SEVEN

SUMMARY, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary of Data

This chapter presents the summary of findings from the prosopographic analysis of this study, as well as the theoretical analysis of the entire investigation that aimed at investigating how the two leaders, Lech Wałęsa and Leymah Gbowee, overcame difficult social conditions. It emphasizes what they have in common. As such, this summary is a composite image of a refined product of oppression. Figure 4 below summarizes the path to leadership of peaceful change both leaders in this study undertook.

Phase 1: Pre-Leadership -----→	Phase 2: Leadership Practice -----→	Phase 3: Legacy -----→
1. Strong mother	1. Goal focus	1. Personal character
2. Formal and informal education	2. Moral compass	2. Ethical leadership
3. Great mentors	3. Community impact	3. Ongoing work
(Chapter 4)	(Chapter 5)	(Chapter 5)

Figure 4: Lech Wałęsa's and Leymah Gbowee's path to leadership of peaceful change

Pre-Leadership Period

Previous generations and protective parents, both of which directly experienced oppression, contributed to Wałęsa and Gbowee becoming leaders of peaceful change. Their mothers guarded their children and grandchildren against the evils of oppression while encouraging them to go out and make a difference in the world. Consciously or not, they helped them think outside the box by providing information from different sources, and frequently by being meek they made their children think in practical terms and focus on solutions.

Seeing that reality did not match their parents' ideals, Wałęsa and Gbowee became stubborn seekers of answers to why this was so. This is where they differed from their peers, whose parents preferred them to remain submissive and just accept the oppressive reality. However, despite the fact that their childhood times were uncertain and volatile and that their peers perceived them as outcasts, neither Wałęsa nor Gbowee recall being unhappy as children.

During childhood, the two future leaders of peaceful change were average to good students. Their formal and informal education contributed to their appreciation of hard work and their conviction that they could achieve something great. However, they did not have the tools yet to fully comprehend why oppression was so devastating. Therefore, when they first understood the unfairness of the social order surrounding them, each laureate initially experienced anger. This feeling made Wałęsa and Gbowee restless and active in their pursuits of answers. As enraged outcasts, who went against the norm, they progressively radicalized. However, because the previous generations had transferred their hopes onto them in the form of the 'gene of freedom,' Wałęsa and Gbowee realized that killing does not bring effective results in the long run.

Their childhood faith communities helped them develop the need to act in unison joining with other people who thought like them. The sense of togetherness brought joy and made them realize that communities rather than individuals generate better social outcomes. Also, when they left their families and immediate communities by choice (Wałęsa) or by circumstance (Gbowee), they came across many individuals who were in similar situations, which reinforced their convictions: the image of oppression enlarged for them.

Furthermore, the mentors in the lives of Wałęsa and Gbowee contributed to their sense of personal security as future leaders. Aware that these patrons continue to stand by them over

time, both leaders consistently exhibit the courage to make important changes in their personal and social lives. Indeed, their supporters prepared them for confident leadership. Also, Wałęsa's and Gbowee's critics and adversaries contributed to their defiance of, but also respect for authority. These superlative leaders understand that it is quite possible to disobey and respect simultaneously.

Active Leadership Period

All of the above lived experiences and interactions became solid grounds for Wałęsa and Gbowee to become critically aware individuals with a deep-rooted sense of purpose. As such, the two leaders quickly became recipients of other people's trust that further solidified their focus on changing the oppressive status quo. Since their predecessors and contemporaries trusted their judgment, they could not let them down. With their strong convictions they confidently led their movements all the way to the Nobel Peace Prize and peace (Wałęsa) or to peace and the Nobel Prize (Gbowee), without regard for political careers and sometimes even against what most people they led thought they wanted. Their strength and responsibility with which they handled the tasks at hand in addition to their serious and cautious approach contributed to strengthening their sense of purpose and to constantly remaining in focus.

Lech Wałęsa and Leymah Gbowee, to whom their followers had granted the privilege of being their leaders, turned into exemplary leaders whose strong faith informed their moral compasses. Indeed, they both understood that without faith, their personal strength would not prevail. As a base of their peaceful actions, faith elevated the struggle to a level that went beyond human understanding. This is why it humbled the leaders themselves and helped them resist any and all temptations to deviate from the path they had taken. They were now not just strong and humble; they were fearless. Furthermore, they each retained the belief that through

their inclusive *modus operandi* they could involve all sides of the conflict in the struggle for peace that they eventually won. Despite experiencing situations where both narrowly escaped death thanks to favorable fate, they held on to the conviction that all people are capable of doing good.

The anger that they had originally carried within them now became more acute, especially that at that point they experienced violence first-hand. Yet as they made acquaintances and friendships with people who thought like them, they created a new community of like-minded adults. These new communities, like the faith groups they had participated in during childhood, helped them channel their anger into a mission for peaceful change that would improve everyone's lives, including their own. As members of the communities that soon became massive movements for peace, they possessed a unique understanding of the needs of all individuals who voiced their concerns. Apprenticeships and sequences of success also helped the two laureates develop the soft skill of being apt for involvement in important matters.

Narratives of Legacy

As accomplished leaders, Wałęsa and Gbowee remain on course and continue their work. There is no retirement for individuals with a character these two leaders exhibit. Having a blessing of previous, oppressed generations, and having won their struggle on behalf of their contemporaries, Wałęsa and Gbowee have the confidence, patience, and drive that are necessary to continue their work. They continue advancing their inclusive agendas in the process of social intervention wherever and whenever someone invites them to serve. Indeed, they are still on the right track. Wałęsa was the first international activist in Libya after the fall of Qaddafi, and Gbowee continues to travel throughout the world and includes women in the process of peaceful change.

Their ethical leadership has its source in strong faith that is a base of their calling and fuels their sense of being right. For them, anger is a source of strength to do more good for all rather than to destroy the opponents. They empathize with all oppressed individuals and groups and implicitly or explicitly they both understand the importance of women in the process of effecting peaceful change.

Wałęsa and Gbowee also continue their work precisely because they have the intuitive insight that gives them the unique understanding of the world's dynamics. With this critical awareness, they continue to advance the cause of all oppressed individuals and groups around the world and work on behalf of their communities. Wałęsa is a loud voice on behalf of imprisoned Nobel Peace Prize laureates and Gbowee keeps working to include women in peace-building processes of post-conflict societies. They both restlessly search for new ways of settling old scores. The next section attempts to find implications of this analysis.

Implications

This study contributes to the domains of leadership and leadership development. It does not just reveal commonalities in the past experiences of two different leaders, but it also identifies certain influencing factors these people share. In this sense, it has implications for all who work on enhancing individual leadership capabilities and improving the quality of leadership, i.e. parents, teachers, mentors, trainers, and other educators. Therefore, this investigation contributes to the discussion of how to lead and key points to be aware of when developing leadership skills. Seeking an answer to the “How” question opened this study to identifying actionable influencers rather than traits of leaders.

This study begs three different levels of implications for those who actively work in leadership and leadership development. The first is about inculcating the ‘gene of freedom’ in

young people. This will be possible when nurturing strong family influences, especially those of mothers, on the upbringing of their children. Their hopes as well as those of the previous generations can settle within young people and become motivators for good work in the future. Young people also need mentors and figures of some stature to look up to as they mature. This explains why it is necessary to continue involving young people's idols together with local activists for peaceful change in order to excite future leaders to aspire for social action for change. Formal education is also important in the development of measurable skills. However, it is through experiences that individuals learn the qualitative aspects of our functioning. Leaders and instructors of leadership must not forget that story is a powerful source of informal education. Parents, mentors, and both types of education young people experience should not only focus on the width of children's experiences, but also on their depth. As sources of emotional imagery stories of lived experience contribute to that very depth and as such they should accompany the entire process of young people's intellectual development.

On the second level of implications, meaning at the time when young adults are beginning their involvement in action for change, it is important for them to remember that in order for their leadership to become that of peace and reconciliation, it is necessary to consider the struggle as a 'religion.' People trust leaders who they see as almost holy figures who have the ability to speak convincingly and excite crowds to act on their oppression by naming their own condition and openly disagreeing with it. Sharing their anger with others, but in combination with hope and faith will spark people's excitement to participate in mass action for peace. Members of that movement will begin to feel part of a community that focuses on the cause of peacefully abolishing the oppressive status quo.

Thirdly, and this is the level of implications that applies to both future and current authoritative figures, it is important to understand the legacy of current great leaders who proved to have been successful in their individual struggles. Their lives and deeds are solid examples of how to grow, how to lead, and how to continue other peoples' work on effecting change. This is why young people and current leaders, who try to become exemplary, should familiarize themselves with the influencers of those renowned figures. Furthermore, those who strive to become leaders need to be able to identify the ethical elements of leadership and remain in touch with accomplished leaders' ongoing work.

Because this study is abundant in stories of oppression and counter-oppression, it has implications for peace-builders, social workers, storytellers for peace, and individuals who work directly with victims and perpetrators of oppression. It reveals the significance of storytelling and emphasizes the importance of including the oppressor in the process of healing. Moreover, this investigation also shows what skills servant leaders should emphasize when working with both sides of any conflict. In this sense, the study contributes to the domain of reconciliation.

By describing oppression and counter-oppression in the lives of Lech Wałęsa and Leymah Gbowee, by showing how both overcame their oppressions, and by conversing with them about their paths to leadership I feel this study has a potential to become useful for victims of oppression who do not yet know how to act in their present situation. After all, this study highlights how successful leaders moved their people from a state of oppression to peace. It also reveals that resistance is, indeed, a democratic act.

Furthermore, the way Wałęsa and Gbowee phrased some of their most important messages not only gives us numerous hints on what it means to be a refined product of oppression, but also demonstrates how each and every one of us should live and lead. That is

why the findings of this study have direct implications for leaders themselves. It is important for leaders of peaceful change to acquire the language and lifestyle of the people they serve and internalize this knowledge to such an extent that it becomes their own. This further strengthens people's identification with the cause through a grounded leader who is one of them.

This study also emphasized the importance of women in effecting change. Mothers are significant contributors to the personal development of leaders. They help understand and distinguish between what is morally good and what is morally wrong (Cudd, 2006). They are also the ones who teach future leaders about forgiveness (Oliver, 2004) and ethics. In this sense, this study implied the need to involve women in the process of conflict resolution and healing.

All of the above implications can find direct application in the process of peacefully effecting change, even on a very local scale. After all, there are many local leaders who make a difference in the small worlds of their homes, schools, jobs, cities, or districts, and it is likely that the world is not even aware of their existence. However, this study may serve as a starting point for identifying refined products of oppression. Maybe one day they too will be sources of new theories in studies that feature their contributions to social change. In the next section, I offer recommendations for leadership, for international institutions that deal with combating oppression, and for further research.

Recommendations

Recommendations for Leadership

Products of oppression have to realize that change does not come overnight. In order to step onto the difficult, long, and dangerous path to overcome oppression in a peaceful way, oppressed individuals must go through the process of refinement. This study showed what such a process entails and what is necessary to become that very refined product of oppression whom

others grant with the leadership privilege. It is important to realize that the role of a leader is not just a post that others grant to unique individuals. Instead, it is a process of constant education – formal and informal alike. Exemplary servant leadership requires open eyes and ears, and focus not on the given, but on the felt. This is why young or aspiring leaders of peaceful change must continuously self-reflect, examine their reality through their otherness, and juxtapose their strong convictions against the submissive majority. After all, understanding the subtleties of small and grand interactions produces leadership's true gifts. Leaders should, therefore, live what they do and act in direct accordance with what they believe while remaining loyal to their original cause. Research indicates that leaders of peaceful change will identify more completely with the struggle if they feel that they act on behalf of their loved ones, especially those who played a key role in their formative years. These people's stories and hopes will fuel the leaders' sense of purpose and help them focus even more strongly on the cause.

For the above reasons, leaders have to be aware of their influences and perceptions because these are the driving forces of their rationale. Furthermore, it is important for leaders to build communities on the basis of their convictions and develop rituals that will make those communities participate in a cause that is even more powerful than their own oppression. Indeed, the process of effecting peaceful change is a religious cause.

Recommendations for International Institutions

The role of international institutions that combat oppression is to promote peaceful ways of effecting change. Because findings of this study revealed that peaceful change is a long process that requires perseverance and solid foundation in believing that it is indeed possible to make the difference, any short-term funding and programs are just useless. This is why it is mandatory for these institutions to prepare for a process, not an action.

In their actions on the ground international institutions should focus on identifying young people whose behaviors and attitudes are different from those of the majority of their peers and should surely not overlook or evade young ‘bullies’. With a grain of faith, these individuals may, indeed, possess leadership capabilities whose origins lie in this very difference, in the possibility that they already understand or at least sense that something is wrong and that their communities need change. Potentially, these people are not yet compliant and submissive and thanks to that they have the potential to lead those who already gave in, but who hope and long for freedom. Establishing long-term leadership development programs for these individuals and their immediate families may strengthen these individuals’ convictions and push them on the right path to becoming leaders of peaceful change who are secure in their awareness that they have support from the ones they love. This in turn will help them lose fear and take action.

Help young radical activists. Another recommendation for international institutions may lie in creating and implementing programs for young radicals. The purpose of such programs would be to help these individuals properly channel their energies and show them that anger can actually be a creative feeling. When these people manage to couple anger with hope and humility they can become women and men of action for peaceful change. Such programs should also focus on bringing together young radicals and involving them in activities that aim at self-discovery and critical assessment of their respective realities. The assistance international institutions provided to Tawakkol Karman and Malala Yousafzai only proves that identifying such individuals and providing them with guidance that could potentially include international recognition is the right path.

Encourage intergenerational dialogue. The findings of this study suggest that in order to abolish oppression through peaceful means there is a need to introduce to all people who

suffer from oppression the stories of those of them who also suffered but managed to do something good with their pain and anger. Programs that bring together mothers, fathers, children, and the elders from various families in faith communities (however one defines faith) may produce inspirational results. In turn, similarities between life stories may first of all help individuals understand that they are not alone and that their entire community, region, or country shares the same experiences. Secondly, those stories may trigger the need to effect change. After all, stories boost imagination and can excite potential leaders to incite others to act on their oppression.

Create another major international peace prize. This study also shows that international recognition does not just single out an individual, but the entire cause, and, more importantly, it is another factor, next to faith, that elevates movements beyond mortality. The Nobel Prize in Peace is a grand example of what international recognition is and what it can do. In the dissertation interview Wałęsa clearly stated that

the Nobel Prize blew wind in our sails, and me personally, it made me immortal ... it was now tough to [*pauses*], to hit me, to ruin me, because there would always be someone in the world who would ask what happened to this Nobel laureate.... It is hard to imagine what would have happened had we not received this prize. (personal communication, October 27, 2012)

Likewise, Gbowee said that:

it gives you a huge [*much louder, with strong emphasis*] platform to do a lot of good. My co-Nobel laureate, Jody Williams, calls it 'a tool.' She said the Prize is a tool, and it's up to you to decide how you're going to use this tool to benefit humanity. (personal communication, April 26, 2013)

Creating a prize that would not be an annual one, but one that would respond to the necessity of assisting a change maker in real or potential danger, or the cause when it loses wind, would potentially greatly benefit movements for peaceful change across the globe. The prize should

originate under the auspices of a reputable international non-governmental organization, to give it prestige.

Recommendations for Further Research

The first recommendation is to examine ordinary people who managed to overcome oppression for themselves and their communities without achieving international recognition. These individuals may be heroes in the eyes of the people whom they actually helped. A collective biography of those individuals may add to a biographical portrait of a refined product of oppression the current study presented. A study of leaders who grew up in abusive families, who lack the comfort of nuclear family support, and who cannot return to the family for consolation, would deepen the findings of this study by providing a different mirror.

This particular work dealt only with social and political oppression. However, both leaders under study experienced oppression from their own people. In order to further verify these findings, it would seem necessary to also examine leadership development of those leaders of peaceful change who grew up under domestic, racial, self-identification and gender-related, international, and many other types of oppression. Since they could be effecting change in a similar way, further studies would need to verify this supposition.

This study focused on the ‘how’ of leadership development and therefore it dealt with factors that influenced the paths of oppressed individuals to leadership. For the purpose of expanding the search for the definition of a refined product of oppression, I recommend a study of traits that leaders of peaceful change who grew up under oppression have. The study would then contribute to the ‘what’ of leadership development.

Finally, I would recommend a scholarly investigation into how oppressed children’s stubbornness and confidence in being different from their peers contribute to their future

leadership. A longitudinal study of a group of child ‘outcasts’ may potentially prove that they have a significant potential for becoming leaders of peaceful change. This study could take place in parts of the world that are vulnerable to social upheavals.

Conclusion

This study analyzed the lived experiences of two leaders of peaceful change who are also refined products of oppression. By selecting two markedly different individuals who seem to have very little in common except being successful in peacefully overcoming oppression and as a result obtaining the Nobel Prize in Peace, I wanted to examine whether common paths to leadership for peace can exist, and the findings of this study confirm my original objective.

The questions that drove the course of this study aimed at determining the rationales behind: 1) the lived experience of Lech Wałęsa and Leymah Gbowee that made them respond to oppression with pacific behaviors; 2) the common influences of the two leaders that caused them to promote peace in their respective regions and throughout the world; 3) the common characteristics in their life stories that affected their leadership.

I found that both leaders managed to overcome the difficult social conditions without resorting to violence by learning their mothers’ and previous generations’ lessons, by remaining in focus throughout their active leadership period, and by the strength of their personal character. However, their success would not be possible without strong faith and the involvement of the entire oppressed community in the difficult work for the good of the society.

The findings of this study imply that since childhood mothers and family elders should be sources of moral education. Furthermore, they must also encourage their young and frequently stubborn children to explore various angles of the small and large issues that affect them. They should be aware that education does not just happen at school, but also in real life, especially

through stories and understanding the mechanisms of individual experiences. Mentors need to reinforce this education and be sources of leaders' confidence that they are on the right path.

Finally, abolishing the oppressive status quo requires a strong character. Leaders of peaceful change have to develop a powerful calling that will enable their anger to come together with faith and contribute to the strength with which leaders' ethical style will end in success. Exemplary leaders also empathize with those they lead and understand the enormous role of women in the process of effecting peaceful change.

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APPENDIX A: QUESTIONS TO LECH WAŁĘSA

Responsibility is the only limitation of freedom – Lech Wałęsa

- 1: Construction of which church in the Przymorze District did Mr. Lenarciak successfully push for in commemoration of the December events of 1970? In short, please, if I may.
2. And the fact that you were very good at archery when you were at school, can it be mataphorized to this kind of your subcutaneous accuracy and feel, or more to patience and lack of hesitancy in the decisions you have been making?
3. How would you define the terms of oppression, violence, oppressive system?
4. Did your parents ever mention to you anything about oppression when you were but a boy? Or when growing up had you had any stories in your memory associated with systemic violence?
5. How do you think your generation as such, the generation of people born right at the end of or right after World War II, express its protest, its dissent?
6. And would you be able to tell why this anger growing within you against that system, against oppression, did not transform, particularly in your case, into violence?
7. And what was it that in fact made it possible for you to determine a moment to name things the way they are and more change that status quo? Anna Kowalczyk wrote about you that you never panicked, never showed irritation, how is it? Didn't you feel fear?
8. And can one easily say that the Nobel Peace Prize makes people international? Did anything at least in your convictions for example change when you received this, this prize?
9. And when you all won already, when June 1989 came and later the presidential election that you, that you won, what challenges did you face then?
10. And why are you against oppression today?
11. And in your opinion, what qualities should a true international leader have?
12. Does a revolutionary have to be lonely in this crowd the leaders leads?
13. And please tell me what do you believe in, and how your faith influences your life?
14. I am also interested in this period of your life, close to the end of the 1970s, when you wrote in your autobiography that you rode trams and told people stories about what had happened to you. You wrote that most of those people considered you quite strange at first, but in the end, they demanded more information. What do you remember from that tram period?
15. And precisely at that moment when the August strikes took place, you write in your autobiography that you had promised yourself that you would never let anybody humiliate you.

Your wife was then in her final pregnancy moments, you were locked up for 48 hours... What do you remember from that moment in time?

16. How do you feel now, after achieving full success and after fulfilling your mission for Poland. Do you miss those important moments?

17. May I ask [your associates] for contacts with other laureates of the Nobel Peace Prize?

APPENDIX B: QUESTIONS TO LEYMAH GBOWEE

When the powerless start to see that they really can make a difference, nothing can quench the fire – Leymah Gbowee

Thank you very much, Ms. Messenger, for taking a few moments to spend with me. I promise not to talk about sex strike. I am here for different reasons. But I honestly would love to hear stories from your belly.

1. I want to start very briefly with going back to Monrovia of August eighteenth, two thousand and three. Very briefly, with that sense of terror that lingered in Monrovia after signing of the Accra Peace Agreement. It is widely presumed that people would feel hope and excitement with such news. You wrote in your book about terror and fear, even being on the verge of panic. If you could briefly address that question.
2. Did your parents or grandparents ever tell you stories of oppression they had experienced? Did you grow up with ant stories of systemic or any other kind of oppression?
3. What kind of oppression did *you* grow up under during your own early childhood, before 1989? How would you define oppression as well as resistance based on this experience?
4. Do you remember any turning points in your convictions about justice during childhood or adolescence? At what point did you feel that the “system” you are growing up in is not fair? How did this reveal itself?
5. Is there a chance I can ask you to look within you and find sources of your radicalism in defending human and women’s rights? What are those sources?
6. And are you able to say why your protest against the system did not turn into violence? Some people and some of Liberia’s leaders such as Doe and Taylor used violence in protest and made relatively quick changes. You had to sit in the field for days and weeks on end to be noticed...
7. How can you describe your attitudes toward oppressors? I do not mean the Taylor’s boys, because they were children, unaware of what they were doing. I mean people like those warlords vacationing in Accra and Akosombo while negotiating the peace treaty. What did you feel when you confronted them?
8. Can one say that a Nobel Peace Prize makes activists international? How have your convictions changed upon reception of the prize? Is being an international leader the same or different from your expectations?
9. And why are you against oppression today?
10. How would you characterize your style of leadership?
11. And what characteristics should a true international leader have?

12. What do you believe in and how does your faith influence your activities? You mention so often in your autobiography that you felt God tricked you, that war took away your faith, but you also quote God frequently...

13. What keeps you going now?

Thank you for meeting with me. When looking for more Nobel Peace Prize Laureates, can I tell them we spoke? Can you recommend that I contact any other laureates for interviews.

APPENDIX C: QUESTIONS TO HAFEEZA RASHED

Thank you for taking your time to answer my questions. I appreciate your assistance in this endeavor.

1. Madam Gbowee told me in her interview that she is driven by a sense of calling, vocation. How does that manifest itself?
2. How long have you known her for?
3. What do you think her strengths as a leader are?
4. Another one of my findings shows that effective leadership is linked to time and place, that great leaders have to select their tools in such a way that they would be useful in the geographic space and the time they operate in. Do you think Madam Gbowee would agree with that?
5. I also found out that only few can become true leaders that change the course of world's history. At the same time, leaders of change think of themselves as ordinary people. How to interpret this paradox?
6. I also learned that true leaders are patient and wait for the right moment to act transparently and without shortcuts. Would you agree with that?
7. How does Madam Gbowee's faith help her?
8. Lastly, it is almost always very risky to be the only face of an entire movement. It is like taking full responsibility for everything the movement is doing. Do you agree that a leader has to be ready to take that responsibility?